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BRITISH ORIENTALISTS

GENERAL EDITOR

W. J. TURNER

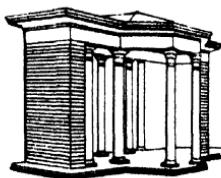


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BRITISH ORIENTALISTS

A. J. ARBERRY

*WITH
8 PLATES IN COLOUR
AND
20 ILLUSTRATIONS IN
BLACK AND WHITE*



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IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
WM. COLLINS SONS AND CO. LTD. GLASGOW



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ORIENTAL ZODIAC
Illustration to Sir William Jones's *Discourse on the Indian Zodiac*, 1799

INTRODUCTION

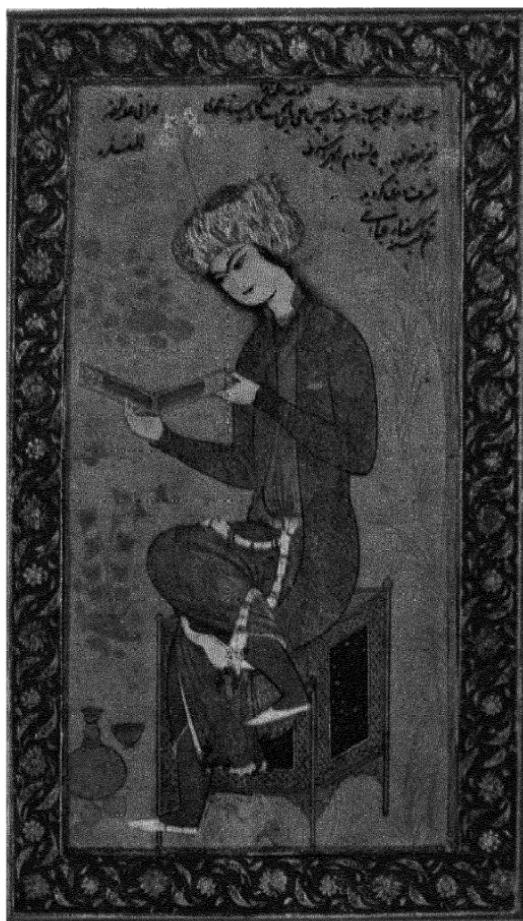
WHAT is Orientalism, and what constitutes an Orientalist? It is clearly desirable that, in approaching a subject so vast and, to the general public, still so unfamiliar, the author should attempt to arrive at an understanding with his readers so that he and they shall know exactly where they stand. This is the more necessary because, like so many other branches of knowledge, orientalism has come to lap over into territories by right belonging to other cognate but distinct sciences, so that in this no-man's-land—or, rather, everyman's-land—the orientalist joins forces with the archaeologist, the historian, the etymologist, the phonetician, the philosopher, the theologian, the musician and the artist.

The original connotation of the term orientalist was, in 1683, "a member of the Eastern or Greek Church": in 1691 Anthony Wood described Samuel Clark as "an eminent orientalian," meaning that he knew some oriental languages. Byron in his notes to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* speaks of "Mr. Thornton's frequent hints of profound Orientalism." During the educational controversy in India which was settled by Macaulay's celebrated *Minute* of 1834, the Orientalists were those who advocated Indian learning and literature, while their adversaries, who desired English to be the basis of education in India, were called Anglicists. It is to be feared that out of the passions generated by this famous quarrel, a certain discredit attached itself to the name orientalist, and it is no doubt with this in mind that Charles Doughty wrote, "The sun made me an Arab, but never warped me to Orientalism." However, the *New Oxford Dictionary* defines an orientalist as "one versed in oriental languages and literature": that is the interpretation we shall adopt in what follows, even though it means leaving for others to write of those legion men of fame who knew the East well and made of it fine literature, yet failed by definition to qualify to be called Orientalists.

Moving from West to East, we shall treat first of the Arabs, the Turks and the Persians, omitting Hebrew as being in its classical form a dead language and in its modern revival in reality a variety of western idiom; omitting also Egyptology and Assyriology because these subjects must be left for the archaeologist. We shall then pass over to India, a vast and varied territory. After that will come Indonesia and the Far East.

The languages and literatures of more than half the human race, and of several great civilisations, thus fall within the province of the Orientalist; and while the present volume is intended rather to treat of the personalities and accomplishments of those British men and women who have made these languages and literatures their special study or favourite diversion, it will nevertheless not be out of place to consider briefly the value of this vast material which has engaged the attention of so many penetrating intellects. Macaulay once wrote that he had never met any student of eastern languages who could convince him that the whole of oriental literature was worth a single shelf of the classics of Europe. If this judgment were true, then clearly we must deplore the time and energy wasted by our brilliant but misguided countrymen who have taken pride in their Orientalism. But it is, of course, a partly malicious and, one fears, wholly ignorant misrepresentation of the facts.

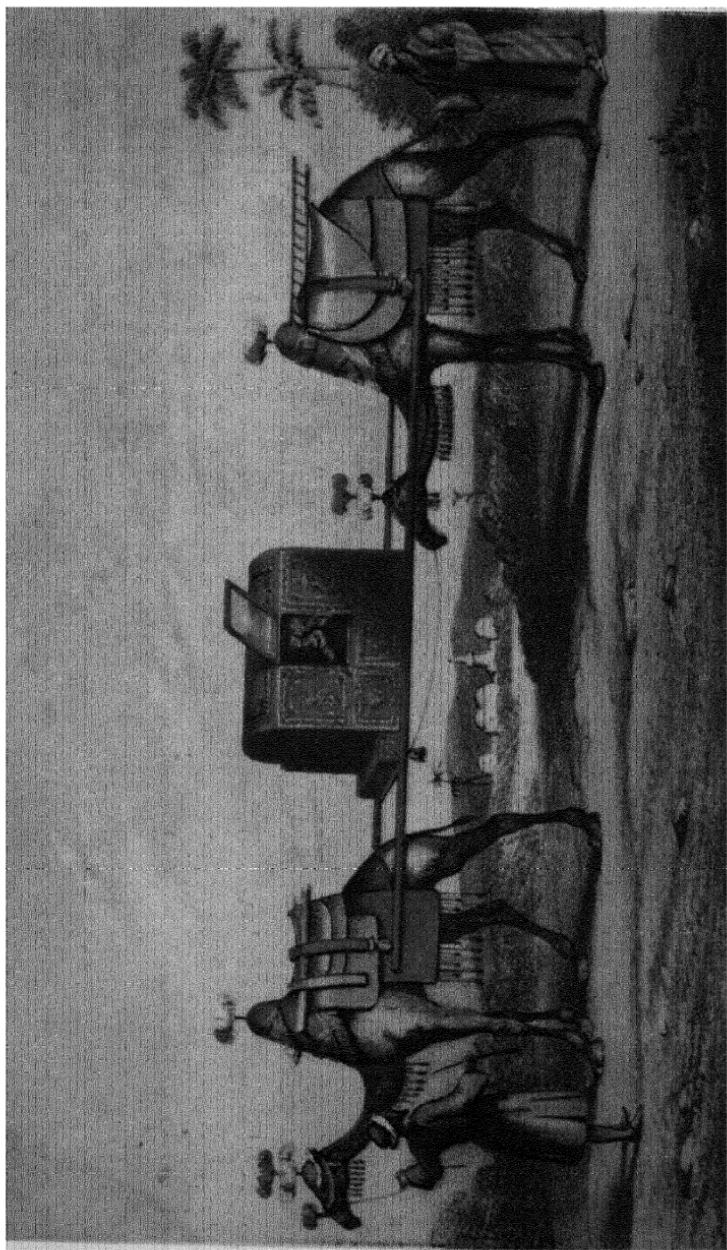
The literatures of the East derive their inspiration from the religions of the East: the forms these literatures have taken are defined by the innate genius and physical environments of the oriental peoples. Islam, born of the arid vastness, the instant perils, the hardship and unfriendliness of the burning wastes of Arabia, teaches that God is omnipotent but also all-compassionate, that man is utterly dependent upon Allah's will but may also aspire to gain eternal bliss. These



PORTRAIT OF A YOUTH READING

Persian miniature by Riza 'Abbasî,
after Muhammadi of Herat, early 17th Century

By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum



THE TAKHTRAWAN OR GRANDEE'S LITTER

Coloured lithograph by Richard Burton

From Burton's *Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah*, 1855

fundamental doctrines have left their impress on all the literatures of the Muslim world. Yet the individual characteristics of each Muslim people have introduced their own variations of the common theme. The Arabs came to inhabit many fertile lands where they lived side by side with vanquished subjects who were heirs to Greece and Rome and followers of the Nazarene : so that while Arab literature has never completely freed itself from a certain aridity attributable to its desert home, it yet broadened out in many directions wholly inconsistent with its limited origins. Before the coming of Muhammad the Arabs possessed a poetic tradition which, though not extensive, represented a highly developed literary sense and a remarkable feeling for nature : poetry has always remained, and continues to be, their chief aesthetic delight, whether its theme be love, the sublime qualities of the patron, the majesty of God or the events of the moment ; one recalls T. E. Lawrence's description of his Bedouin followers improvising odes on the motor-car to the rhythm of their camel mounts. Pride in ancestry, typical of the nomad tribesman, caused the Arabs to develop an historical sense which, coupled with their attention to detail born of desert life, bore fruit in a vast literature of biography and historiography : the events this literature chronicles are sufficiently dramatic, for there is surely no story equal in glamour and tragic splendour to that of the rise, decline and fall of the Caliphate. The Arabic language, ingenious in structure, at once rigid and sensitive, with its almost unlimited vocabulary to which all the tribes contributed their share of synonyms, being by theological definition a perfect instrument—for the Koran is held to be the very word of God—thus became a subject worthy of study ; no occidental literature can in any way bear comparison with Arabic in the fields of grammar, rhetoric, lexicography and all the branches of philology. When to all this is added the great literature of theology, law, philosophy, mathematics and science it becomes clear that the literary legacy of the Arabs is something rather more than the tales of the Arabian Nights which for most westerners represent the sum of Arab letters.

The Persians already had an ancient civilisation when the Arabs swept eastwards ; their high artistic gifts which found expression in the majestic monuments and exquisite pottery and metalwork of the pre-Islamic age, and after the conversion to Islam delighted mankind with so many fine products of hand and eye, working in the materials of a supple and melodious language created a glorious literature. Persia is also the home of mysticism ; it was Persia which gave birth to Zoroaster and Manes ; the mystical element inherent in Islam among the Persians broke all bounds, so that no other literature can compare with theirs for both richness and profundity of mystical imagery. The Persians, being by race akin to the Greeks, shared with them the common Aryan inheritance of the epic : while in Firdawsi movement and event dominate all else, the later poets are influenced on the one hand by mystical thought and on the other by the colour technique of the miniaturist. Turkish and Urdu are also rich in poetry of both

these kinds, and all the languages of Islam possess important historical literatures.

Space prevents us from attempting a similar analysis of the literatures which derive from Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism and the other religions of the East. As for the merits of those literatures, fortunately the work of scholars over the past century has produced more than sufficient evidence to establish their claim to consideration. The rich imaginative genius that gave birth to the *Mahabharata* with its legends of gods and men which form the themes of India's sacred drama, the religious fervour that inspired the hymns of the *Rig-veda*, the old animal fables, product of the Indian jungle, which came to Europe already in Aesop's day and have since spread throughout the world ; the metaphysical subtleties and mystical sublimities of monks meditating in Tibet's mountain fastnesses ; the deep, practical, humorous wisdom of Confucius and the subtle light and shade of Chinese poetry ; the tribal legends and proverbial sayings of Indonesia—who can now deny that all this is a proper subject for the scholar's study and the delight of the general public ?

Finally, in order to complete this brief survey of the land that lies ahead, let us consider the motives and opportunities which explain the profound interest and prodigious achievements of British scholars in all these branches of oriental learning. No doubt, considering the matter dispassionately, it is possible to draw an analogy between that spirit of adventure and enquiry which took men from these shores to the distant corners of the earth, and a corresponding element of the British mind that seeks satisfaction in the abstruse and recondite territories of knowledge. Maybe there is something in our mongrel ancestry which urges us, confined against further westward wanderings by the seas that surround our island home, to go East again in mind, if not in body, and burst the bondage which might otherwise overwhelm us. The university don, immured in his well-stocked library, though he may never have travelled further East than Vienna, can through inherited instinct and native intuition arrive at a profoundly accurate interpretation of the mind and soul of dwellers in Samarkand or far Tartary. Yet, for every one such scholar, dozens have pursued the same ends because they have dwelt in those distant lands among those alien peoples. The quest for trade, and later the responsibility of government, have, side by side with the pure joy of exploration, brought many acute and penetrating minds to bear on the living cultures of the orient ; and not a few of our greatest orientalists have been men who found in orientalism a refreshment after the arduous and mentally exhausting conduct of affairs and business. There is besides another group of dauntless workers who have gone out to the East to convert, and have ended by themselves being partially converted : those missionary scholars to whose meticulous labours we owe an immense debt of gratitude. Of all these men it is characteristic that, turning aside from the beaten track and known way of learning, they have ventured into regions where, oftener than not, no traveller had preceded them. They



'RUSTAM AND THE WHITE GIANT'
Copy of an illumination from a Persian MS.

have known the thrill of rich discovery, but they have also experienced the loneliness of the pioneer. To a very great extent they have been constrained to invent their own techniques and to set up their own standards of comparison : self-reliance and the power of self-criticism have been their sure and frequently their only guide. It is, of course, true that every scholar and every scientist must become his own most ruthless critic, if he is to achieve a measure of greatness. In most other subjects, however, the beginner and even the mature student can

enjoy the benefit of established tradition and strong competition : the orientalist from the very start of his researches often lacks outside help. So it comes about that the history of orientalism abounds with the names of both charlatans and great scholars : an amusing book could be written about the activities of the former—for many of them have been charming rogues—but it is only with the accomplishments of the latter that this volume proposes to treat.



THE CONSTELLATION PERSEUS
English illumination, c. 1490, derived from Arabic sources

ARABIA AND PERSIA

WHEN the Arabs in the first part of the seventh century, fired by a new faith and the dazzling prospect of conquest in the name of Allah, erupted from their arid peninsular home and spread themselves from Spain to India and beyond, they carried with them a language that was destined to become the vehicle of a great literature, a language privileged moreover to serve as the medium whereby forgotten Aristotle and Galen would for centuries be transmitted until their glorious rediscovery in the original tongue.

The first Englishman known for certain to have been a scholar of Arabic was Henry II's tutor, Adelard of Bath, who travelled widely in Spain and Syria and translated a number of Arabic texts into Latin. Others who sailed from these



THE CONSTELLATION PERSEUS
Illumination from an Arabian MS.

shores in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in quest of the Moorish learning and returned to enlighten their fellow-countrymen include Daniel of Morley and the great Michael Scotus, astrologer and alchemist, whose translations of Aris-

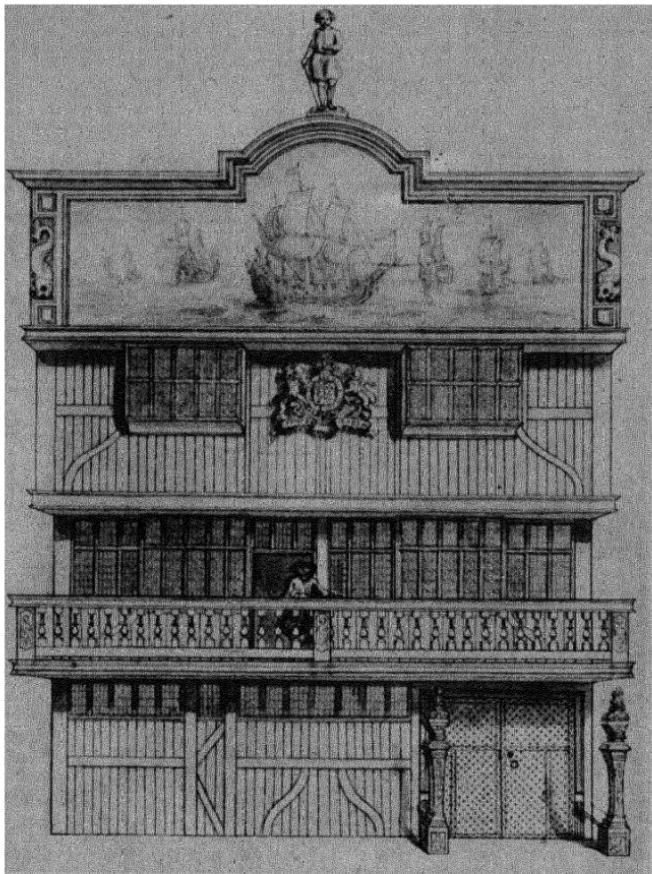
tote from the Arabic attained a just celebrity and were of great value during the first renaissance. It is interesting to remark that the first book to be printed in England, the *Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, was a translation of a popular Arabic compilation. It is curious, however, that the Crusaders appear to have neglected their opportunities of learning their chivalrous foe's language, though they learned much chivalry from him.

The rediscovery of Greek learning put a different complexion on matters. Arabic had hitherto been studied as a key to ancient philosophy and science : henceforward its sole recommendation consisted in its own intrinsic merits. But for some centuries yet these merits were found only in such contributions as the Arabs had been able to make to medicine, mathematics and astronomy, and these are considerable : Arabic literature and culture, which we now accept unquestioningly as the chief glory of Arab civilisation, were entirely neglected in the West.

The fifteenth century is remarkable for two events of incomparable importance for their bearing on the relations between East and West. In 1453 Constantinople passed irrevocably into the hands of the Muslim Turks, and the Crescent rose brilliantly over Eastern Europe : Vasco da Gama circled the Cape some forty years later and brought the Portugese traders and missionaries to India, to be followed in turn by the English, the Dutch and the French. To secure their communications with India the Portugese found it expedient to make settlements on the coasts of Arabia and in the Persian Gulf ; their lead was emulated by their rivals and eventual dispossessors ; all this called not only for naval and military prowess—that goes without saying—but also for finesse in statesmanship : and it is not uncommon for diplomatic representatives after long residence to become familiar with the language and culture of the countries in which they represent the interests of their native land. It is true that the first Englishman to seek commercial concessions at the Persian court bore with him letters in Hebrew, Latin and Italian, and it is not surprising that his enterprise failed : but things did not always remain thus.

British trade and diplomacy quickly profited of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and one of the last events of Elizabeth's glorious reign was the granting of a charter to the newly-founded East India Company. Attempts to establish commerce with Persia by way of Russia had been made from 1560 onwards, but with the seas open to British merchantmen the Cape route immediately commended itself as more economic, and the struggle now began which had as its final result the assertion of British naval supremacy in eastern waters beyond India to the coasts of China.

So much reference to history is necessary in order to explain the new spirit which animates British orientalism from the beginning of the seventeenth century. The quest for profitable commerce, that most potent stimulant of various human activities, had its natural effect on the nation's intellectual interests and accom-



THE OLD EAST INDIA HOUSE, LONDON
Engraving, 1711

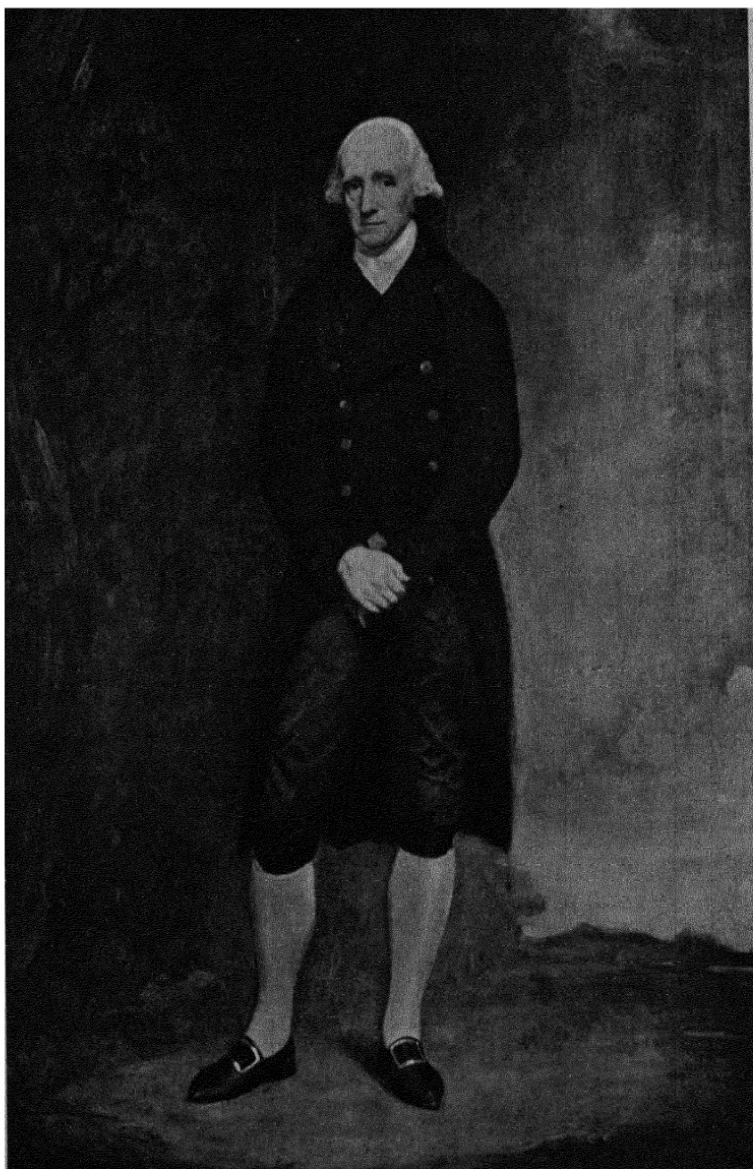
plishments. While the trader sought to secure material benefit from his relations with the eastern peoples, the evangelist, sometimes preceding him and sometimes following closely in his wake, filled with a laudable zeal to fulfil his Master's charge to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," found it ancillary to his soul-saving purpose to learn the language and thought-processes of his prospective flock. More than ever did this become desirable, when the Christian advocate found himself confronted by another missionary religion in Islam, and by preachers who taught against a background of mature culture and

intricate theology. It is thus in a sense symbolic that while a layman, Sir Thomas Adams, founded the first chair of Arabic at Cambridge (1632), no less a person than Archbishop Laud patronised the rival chair at Oxford (1636).

The first noteworthy Arabist of this new age was William Bedwell, who wrote of Arabic that it was "the only language of religion and the chief language of diplomacy and business from the Fortunate Isles to the China Seas": he produced the first English version of the Koran. The brothers John and Thomas Greaves of Oxford both knew Arabic and Persian well: John, a noted mathematician and sometime professor of astronomy, published some important books on the Muslim contribution to astronomy and mathematics. The leading Arabist of the seventeenth century was however Edward Pococke, pupil of William Bedwell, who travelled extensively in the Near East and acquired a profound knowledge of both written and spoken Arabic. Living for five years in Aleppo, he put together a fine collection of Arabic manuscripts which now form a part of the Bodleian's prized treasures.

With the revival in England of Arabic studies came the beginnings of Persian and Turkish scholarship. At this time the whole area of the Near and Middle East constituted a religious and cultural and, to a considerable extent, political unity, and there was the closest interpenetration of the three chief literary languages of Islam: Persian was the court-language of the Moghuls of India and the medium of polite intercourse in Turkey; Turkish was spoken widely throughout the Ottoman empire; Arabic was carried by missionaries and traders from Morocco to Zanzibar, from Syria to Java and beyond. It is therefore natural to take the three cultures together in the following pages, for most Englishmen having one of the three languages have possessed them all.

George Sale, a lawyer, took to the study of Arabic and made the most celebrated translation of the Koran, to which he prefixed a noteworthy preliminary discourse: this book achieved fame on the Continent; it was quoted by Voltaire; it has been used by all subsequent translators. But the most important event of the eighteenth century, from the orientalist standpoint, was the foundation in 1784 of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. We shall be saying more of this in the next chapter and of its founder, Sir William Jones, of whom it is necessary to remark here that he was an excellent Arabic and Persian scholar, beside his other numerous accomplishments: he wrote a famous Persian grammar which went through many editions, edited and translated several Persian texts, and made an admirable version of the seven great odes of pagan Arabia. Jones's contemporary, Charles Wilkins, whom we shall also mention later, knew Arabic and Persian as well as several Indian languages. It was at this period that the East India Company, alive to the desirability of sending out its employees at least partially qualified in the languages and culture of the people among whom they were to work, founded the college at Hertford which is now known as Haileybury: Arabic



WARREN HASTINGS 1732-1818
Oil painting by George Romney

and Persian were among the subjects prescribed for which professorships were established. This development gave a great impetus to oriental studies in this country ; Englishmen in India learnt to dispute learnedly in Persian and to quote Hafiz as they would Horace ; and during the next two generations Britain led the world in Islamic as well as Indian scholarship.

Persian studies owe a great debt of gratitude to Francis Gladwin, sometime officer in the Bengal Army and a *protégé* of Warren Hastings whose enthusiasm for oriental learning was unbounded : it was at the instance of Warren Hastings that the East India Company published Charles Wilkins's famous translation of the Sanskrit *Bhagavad-gita* ; Hastings, who was able to quote the Persian poets, also put together a choice collection of oriental manuscripts which he afterwards sold at a very reasonable price to the Company ; in this and many other ways the great Governor-General did much to second the labours of that noble band of Bengal pioneers.

An important aspect of Persian studies at this period was the aid they afforded to the writing of India's history. When Robert Orme composed his celebrated *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan* (London, 1763-1778), he was compelled to draw mainly on European sources, for he knew no Persian and scarcely any of the important and voluminous histories of the Indian dynasties written in Persian had yet been translated. From 1770 onwards this situation began to be remedied ; in particular the *Bibliotheca Indica* of the Asiatic Society of Bengal provided the material means for publishing these histories ; and when the time came for Sir H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson to issue their monumental *History of India as told by its own Historians* (8 volumes, 1866-1877), the advance which had been made since Orme's day was abundantly apparent. As for the history of Persia, work in this country was well started by Sir John Malcolm, who spent many years in the East and learned to love and admire the Persian people ; his writings abound in personal touches that indicate the breadth of mind and warmth of sympathy characteristic of the true humanist. It was Malcolm, moreover, who first fired Henry Rawlinson, father of General Rawlinson who smashed the Hindenburg Line, with enthusiasm for Persian studies : for when Rawlinson first travelled out to India, he happened to have the great historian as a shipmate, and it was ultimately as a result of the friendship then formed between the two that Rawlinson entered upon those researches into the archaeology of ancient Persia that founded a new science and fall outside the scope of the present volume.

While Persian studies were thus being firmly established and incidently spreading from Britain to the Continent where they engaged the interest of such men as Voltaire and Goethe, Arabic scholarship made simultaneous progress so that the nineteenth century was crowded with famous personalities whose labours and writings did much to create the now traditional friendship between the



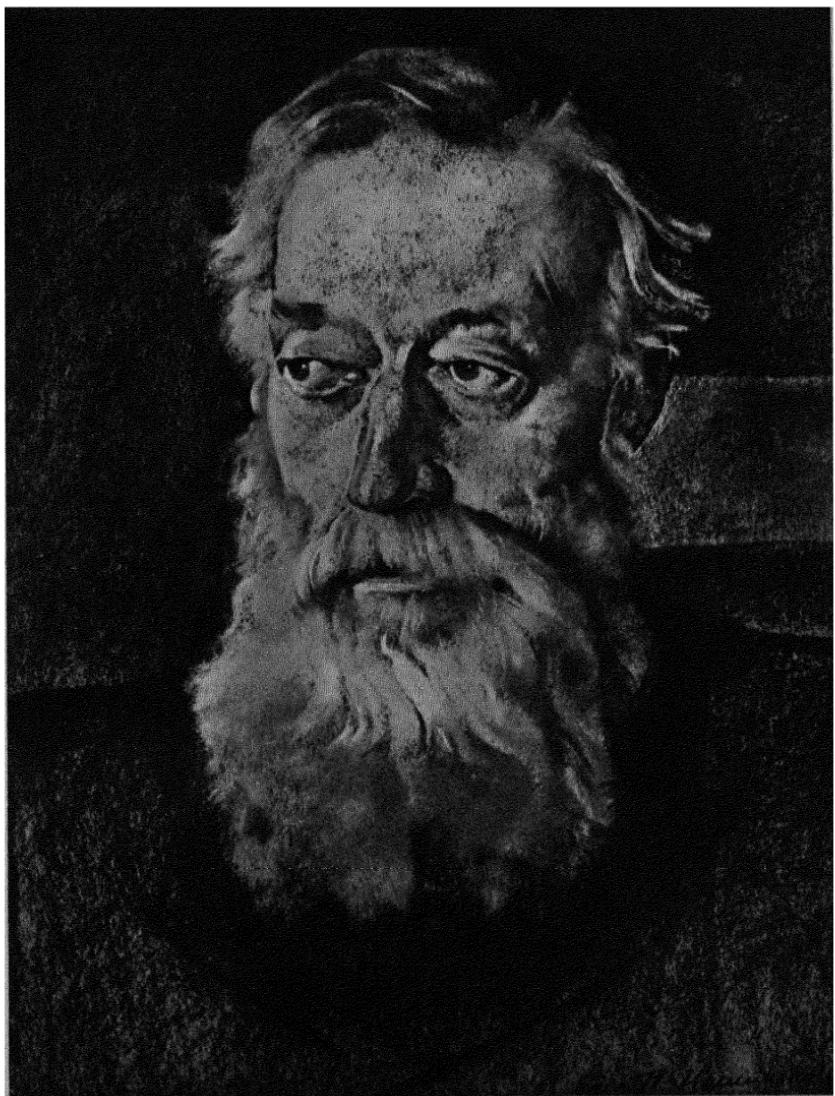
SULTANIE, PERSIA
Engraving by P. Schenk, 1702

British and Arab peoples. Nor were Turkish studies neglected : at one end of the century the career of Sir James Redhouse began when he took employment under the Ottoman government in 1826 ; in 1901 died all too prematurely the greatest scholar of Turkish ever produced outside Turkey, E. J. W. Gibb, whose *History of Ottoman Poetry* represents a most remarkable achievement for so short a life, adorned as it is with numerous graceful verse-translations. Redhouse secured the gratitude of posterity by compiling a Turkish-English dictionary which has not yet been surpassed ; the mother of E. J. W. Gibb perpetuated her son's memory by founding a trust for the publication of books on Arabic, Persian and Turkish studies, and the *Gibb Memorial Series*, now completing its fourth decade, has established itself as a standard of exact scholarship and a precious opportunity for the publication of rare texts.

It was in 1801 that the man was born whose name became a household word throughout the world of Arabic scholarship, the man whose massive dictionary, the finest monument of Arabic lexicography, nevertheless came from the same pen that wrote a most charming and intimate account of Egypt in the early nineteenth century. E. W. Lane embarked for Alexandria in 1825, and had an

adventurous two months' voyage during which his life was imperilled by mutiny and a great storm that promoted the young scholar to the unwonted role of helmsman, the captain going sick and there being none other aboard able to navigate. "On my first landing," he wrote, "I was filled with emotion, like an Eastern bridegroom about to lift the veil of his as yet unseen bride." Lane speedily succumbed to the charms of a Cairo still scarcely touched by occidental influences : after a return visit in 1833 he wrote his *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* which established itself immediately as a popular favourite. From Cairo of the 1830's to Baghdad of the golden days of Haroun Alraschid was not such a very long step ; and Lane's next work, a scholarly yet eminently readable translation of the *Thousand and One Nights*, is still a classic and has charmed many thousands who have never aspired to read the tales in the original Arabic : it is almost fantastic to think what influence this publication may have had, for example, on the development of the English pantomime ! But Lane's life-work, as we have already indicated, was the magnificent dictionary which he left still unfinished at his death. To collect the material, scattered over many native Arabic lexicons in his time still unpublished, Lane went out to Egypt once more in 1842 and for three years worked unremittingly twelve to fourteen hours a day : the data thus amassed took him his remaining twenty-five years to sift and set in order. Lane's lexicon is perhaps the greatest contribution to Arabic scholarship made by any single European scholar, and is to be reckoned among the most noteworthy services ever performed by any philologist for any language.

A man of very different tastes and character, a later contemporary of Lane, who nevertheless left his mark on Arabic as on other studies, was the indefatigable explorer and author Sir Richard Burton, who after seeing service in the British Army in India came to Cairo in 1853 and from there set out on a remarkable journey to Mecca and Medina, thus becoming one of a very select band of non-Muslims to visit the sacred cities of Islam. Burton, like T. E. Lawrence, a Cornishman, emulated Lane in bringing out a translation of the *Arabian Nights*, but whereas Lane's interest was mainly focussed on the light these tales shed on the social life of mediaeval Islam, Burton's approach was more full-blooded and his notes are a rich repository of all kinds of curious lore. The name of Burton immediately evokes the memory of another great Englishman who knew and loved the Arabs well: Charles Doughty, author of the inimitable *Arabia Deserta*, with Edward Fitzgerald a native of Suffolk. Dressed as a Syrian and hoping to be taken for a Persian, Doughty joined the pilgrim-train in 1876 and on his return wrote the book whose publication, after several refusals, provoked much controversy ; so that it has only been in the present generation that the vigour and originality of its extraordinary style has been fully appreciated. Who can now read those thrilling words with which Doughty describes the beginning of his historic journey, without thinking of that other epic of human courage and high adventure,



C. M. DOUGHTY 1843-1926
Pastel by Eric Kennington, 1921

told in equally memorable and moving language by the man whose name is forever inseparably associated with the Desert—Lawrence of the Arabs ? “The new dawn appearing,” writes Doughty, “we removed not yet. The day risen the tents were dismantled, the camels led in ready to their companies, and halted beside their loads. We waited to hear the cannon shot which should open that year’s pilgrimage. It was near ten o’clock when we heard the signal gun fired, and then, without any disorder, litters were suddenly heaved and braced upon the bearing beasts, their charges laid upon the kneeling camels, and the thousands of riders, all born in the caravan countries, mounted in silence.” This tense, nervous, patriarchal prose, whose style betrays countless traces of a mind that thought in Arabic, has been tardily acclaimed a masterpiece of English literature, and certainly left its mark on the soul of the Elizabethan adventurer of the twentieth century whose life was so prodigally shattered in a casual motoring accident. Burton, Doughty, Lawrence—has any other nation produced in so short a span of years three men of equal measure ?

Cloister and desert met in E. H. Palmer who, orphaned in early childhood, collected languages as other boys collect postage-stamps : a native of Cambridge, he was taken up by St. John’s and rose to be Lord Almoner’s Professor of Arabic, a chair of ancient foundation which was unfortunately suppressed in 1934. He was equally at home in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, all of which he wrote fluently even to the point of composing verses in them : he travelled extensively in the Near East and eventually gave his life in his country’s service at the early age of 42 when, engaged on a delicate mission, he was set upon by marauding Bedouins and murdered in the Egyptian desert. The official world, darkly suspicious of the scholar-foundling, who disappeared with so much money into the wilderness, afterwards made amends for unworthy thoughts by burying Palmer in St. Paul’s. Two other men in the classic tradition of British orientalism who were fine Arabic scholars as well as famous administrators were Sir William Muir and Sir Charles Lyall, both of whom had long connections with India. Muir was a born historian, and his biography of Muhammad and *Rise, Decline and Fall of the Caliphate*, products of wide reading and deep research, remain without rival in our language. Lyall, who is still affectionately remembered at the India Office where he found time somehow in the intervals of his arduous duties to spend long hours in the Library reading-room presided over by Chantrey’s bust of Henry Colebrooke, was among the first authorities of all time on early Arabian poetry. The poets of pagan Arabia whom Sir William Jones had introduced to the British public of his day found another sensitive and gifted interpreter in Lady Anne Blunt, grand-daughter of Lord Byron : collaborating with her husband Wilfred Scawen Blunt the champion of all oppressed peoples and friend of Jamal al-Din Afghani and Orabi Pasha, she made the finest rendering in any language of the immortal “Hanging Odes.”

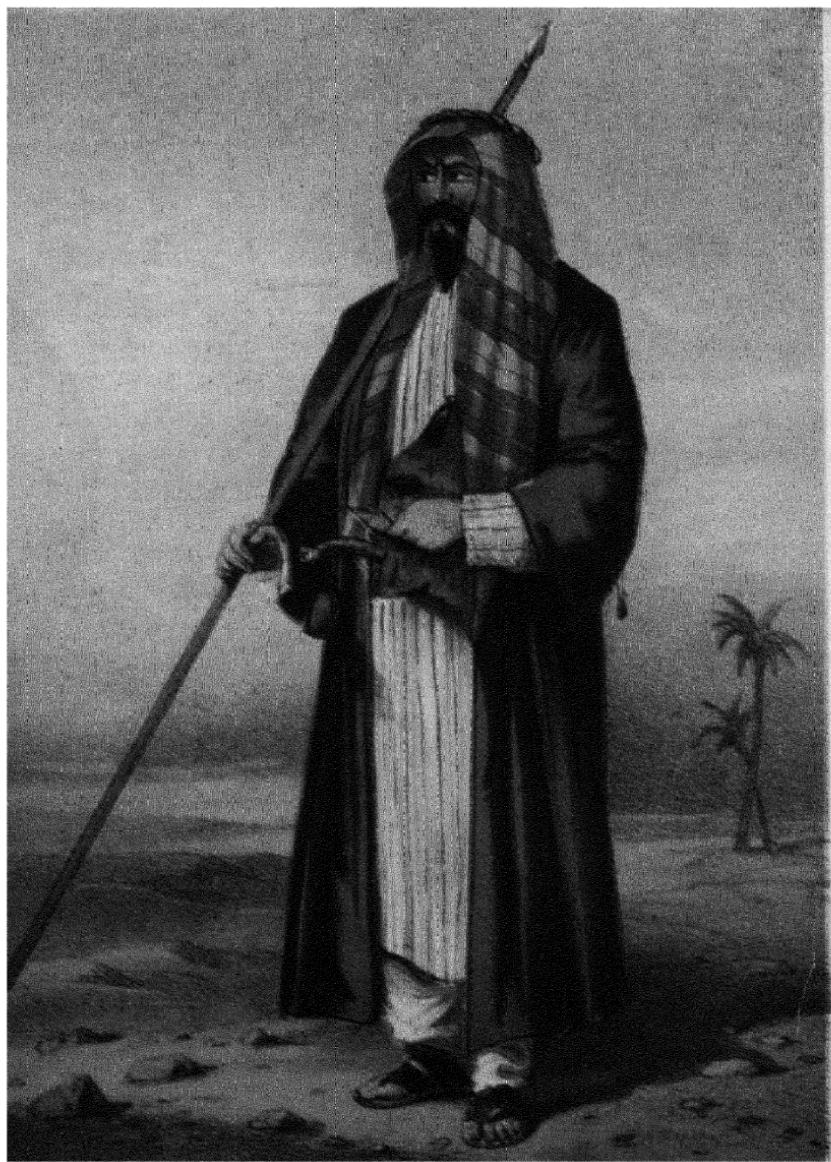


A PERSIAN POET PRESENTING A PANEGYRIC TO A MONGOL PRINCE
Frontispiece to *A Literary History of Persia* by E. G. Browne

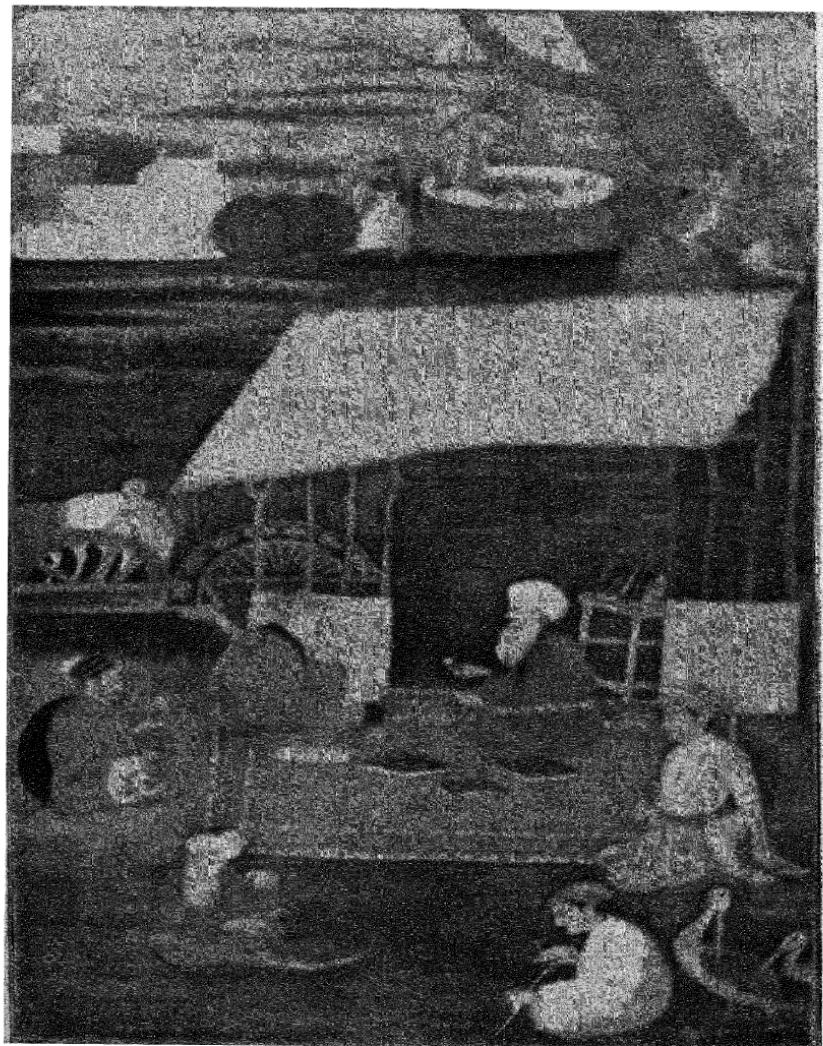
There can be few English readers of the last three generations who have not at some time fallen beneath the spell of Edward Fitzgerald's resurrected Omar Khayyam. The *Rubáiyát*, whose first edition (Quaritch, 1859), remaindered for some time at a penny a copy, is now eagerly sought by collectors on its rare appearances in the auction rooms, has enriched the language with many familiar phrases and stands among the most famous translations of world literature. It is not so often remembered that Fitzgerald, who learned his Persian from the Cambridge Sanskritist E. B. Cowell, also translated the epic *Salaman and Absal* of Jami and parts of Attar's *Allegory of the Birds*: the merit of these productions has been overshadowed by the astounding fame of his Omar. Imitation, they say, is the sincerest form of flattery: Fitzgerald's imitators have been legion, and there is scarcely a literary language that does not nowadays possess its *Rubáiyát* in direct succession to the brilliant failure of 1859. Yet Fitzgerald rarely moved beyond the borders of his native Suffolk, and the mind that called back to life the spirit of a Persian dead these many centuries was the mind of an Englishman

whom Rossetti, Swinburne and Meredith were delighted to call friend, an Englishman who found his greatest pleasure in yarning with Suffolk fishermen. Without Jones and Gladwin and Malcolm, Fitzgerald might never have ventured beyond his Calderon ; without Fitzgerald, English literature could scarcely have known Flecker's *Hassan* : so delicately from mind to mind runs the thread of thought and inspiration. And there is surely no greater paradox in literary history than this, that Omar the Tentmaker, celebrated in his day as astronomer and geometrician but held in little esteem by his critical countrymen for his few verses, should after so long years and in so far a country find through the genius of a Suffolk gentleman fame as the philosopher-poet that will last as long as the English tongue remains.

As Omar is accounted by the Persians among the least of their many poets, so to Hafiz is awarded the palm of undisputed supremacy in the lyric. Many have sought to do for Hafiz what Fitzgerald did for Omar, among them Walter Leaf the Homeric scholar and the poet Le Gallienne. Hafiz has not had the elusive fortune of Omar ; yet if any English rendering of Persian poetry deserves to share the celebrity of the *Rubáiyát*, it is surely the sweet singer of Shiraz in the version of Gertrude Bell. This, the first fruits of a famous connection with the Middle East that produced such charming travel-books and is being remarkably revived in these days by Miss Freya Stark, constituted at its first appearance in 1896 an astonishing achievement in this Oxford scholar who had been learning Persian four years. Among Miss Bell's earliest friends and admirers was Edward Granville Browne, the greatest scholar of Persian ever born outside the land of Omar. Browne entered orientalism, learning Turkish as a boy, because he wanted to fight for Sultan against Czar. That war came to an end before the youthful paladin could take ship, however, and Browne, an engineer's son who was intended for a career in medicine, proceeded to Cambridge where he read simultaneously for his M.B. and the Oriental Languages Tripos. It is said that his one and only occasion of practising was when an undergraduate of Pembroke rashly followed an old receipt for hippocrene ; at all events he had a practical and all but tragic experience of dangerous drugs during his *Year Among the Persians*, for contracting ophthalmia he tried the effect of *bang* and narrowly escaped becoming an addict. Browne retained his interest in medicine, and few honours gave him keener pleasure than when he was invited to lecture on Arabian Medicine before the College of Physicians. Being in Persia when the memory of the persecuted Babi sect was still fresh, and having a mind insatiably curious for religious discussion, Browne spent many years and much toil telling the story of this strange movement. But his chief love was always Persian literature, and he was twenty years writing his masterly *Literary History of Persia*. Browne was by no means the brilliant academician only, however ; he revived the highest traditions of college life ; and in politics championed the first still-born democratic strivings



THE PILGRIM
Coloured lithograph by Richard Burton



**THE EMPEROR SHAH JĀHAN
VISITING A TEACHER**

Indian Miniature, Moghul School, 17th Century

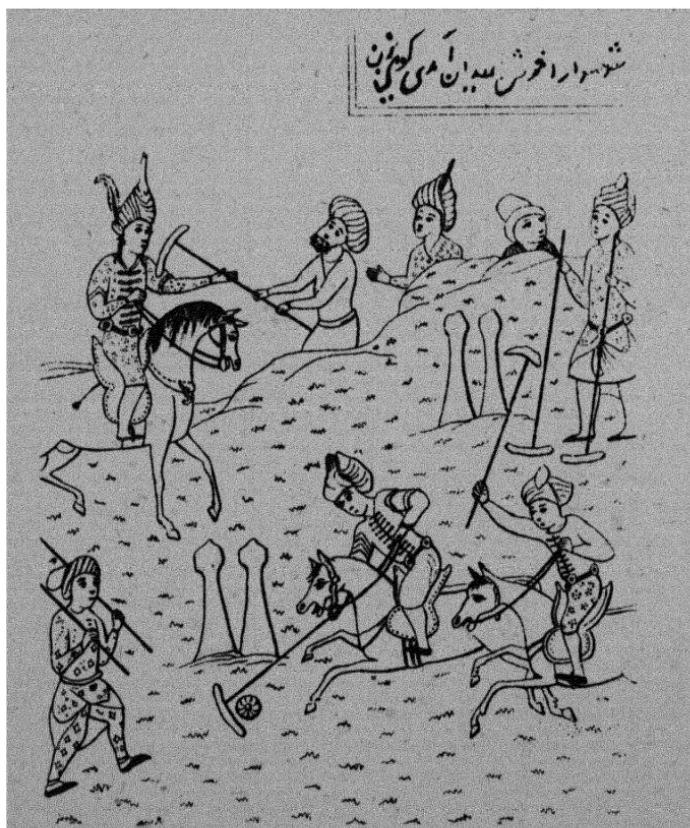
By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum

of his beloved Persia. When he died, his passing was mourned by the whole Persian nation ; a special meeting of the Majliss was convoked to pay homage to his memory ; a leading Teheran newspaper spoke for the people in writing of him : "There is no person in our history whose services to Persian literature can be compared with those of Browne, save those rendered by the great kings such as Mahmoud of Ghazna the patron of Firdawsi, and Sanjar the Seljuk, Anwari's protector. And while they laboured in their own country's interest, Browne did everything for the rebirth and propagation of a language not his mother-tongue. Browne will live for ever in our hearts and Persia will preserve of him an ineffaceable memory, the dear and precious memory of a great and noble Friend."

While E. G. Browne was Sir Thomas Adams Professor at Cambridge, his colleague in the Laudian chair at Oxford was D. S. Margoliouth, a man recently mourned of whom it has been said that none in his generation equalled him for general erudition. If Margoliouth's name is chiefly associated with Arabic studies, to which he made voluminous and noteworthy contributions, his interest ranged over the whole field of Semitics ; like his wife, he was an excellent Syriac scholar, and he also mastered Hebrew and Ethiopic : as for his adventures in Greek philology, though they were frowned on by Hellenists they at least aided materially the reconstruction of the text of Aristotle's *Poetics*. Among the many pupils who passed before him in fifty years professing was our present Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden. When the London School of Oriental Studies was opened in the last war, its first Director and Professor of Persian was Sir Denison Ross, its first Professor of Arabic, Sir Thomas Arnold. Both had had distinguished careers in India, Ross at Calcutta and Arnold at Aligarh : both in these days revived the memory of the Bengal pioneers. Arnold wrote learnedly and well on Arab history, but later became an eminent authority on Islamic art where he had for colleague our fine connoisseur and poet Laurence Binyon. Ross was an adventurous linguist seeking but just missing the universalism of Sir William Jones ; yet for all that he knew not a few languages well and many fairly ; wrote much ; mirrored learning to the public ; and was above all a social man, dining and wining well and having an inexhaustible wit.

E. G. Browne was succeeded by his life-long friend R. A. Nicholson, the *doyen* of living Arabists, a man of rare learning and unrivalled industry. Though never visiting the East, he has attained to an understanding of the mind of Islam unequalled by any contemporary : he is the greatest of all authorities on Islamic mysticism. His *Literary History of the Arabs* is the best book on the subject in any language : his monumental edition and translation of the Persian Rumi, writer of the world's finest mystical epic, surpasses all work ever done on this celebrated author. Nicholson is a classic example of the scholar who in his study reaches into the soul of a far people and is attuned with all its motions.

Of our statesmen, many since Warren Hastings have admired Islamic culture : not a few have written the history of the Muslim peoples. Persia had a good friend in Lord Curzon, Egypt in Lord Lloyd who so admirably completed the narrative of the Earl of Cromer. It is the hope of every orientalist that Mr. Eden, whose brilliant academic career promised so much for Islamic studies, may find the time after the anxious cares of the present war are over to make those contributions to Arabic and Persian scholarship which Gladstone made to Greek, and inspire a generation by no means destitute of talent to retain that supremacy in orientalism established in Bengal a century and a half ago and never lost.



ILLUMINATION FROM A PERSIAN MS.
Frontispiece to Fitzgerald's translation of the *Rubáiyát* of *Omar Khayyam*



EDWARD FITZGERALD 1809-1883
Pencil drawing by Spedding

INDIA

THE discovery of the Cape route to India opened up possibilities of immense profit to the merchants of western Europe: the fields of intellectual exploitation awaiting the western philologist were no less extensive, and if the harvest of the scholar was later gathering than that of the trader, the fault must be ascribed not to indifference so much as to the tardy development of an exact science of linguistics. It is indeed only within our lifetime that the language-map of India has been completely drawn, and there still remain numberless features in outlying parts to be surveyed and accurately described. It is characteristic of the welter of confused ideas prevailing down to the end of the eighteenth century that for many generations serious writers believed and repeated that one of the most widely distributed languages of the Indian sub-continent was Malay.

Edward Terry was the first Englishman to mention in print the vernacular languages of India, this in his *Voyage to the East Indies* of 1655. Thomas Coryate is reported to have spoken both Persian and Hindustani with great fluency, and no doubt many others of the early servants of the East India Company acquired a working knowledge of the more important tongues. But to illustrate the uncertain basis on which such mastery was built it will suffice to quote Fryer who writes in 1673, "The language at Court is Persian, that commonly spoken is Indostan (for which they have no proper character, the written language being called *Banyan*), which is a mixture of *Persian* and *Sclavonian*, as are all the dialects of India." In the same year Ogilby's *Asia* appeared: to him belongs the credit of founding the Malay heresy—possibly he confused Malay with Malayalam, an important dialect of southern India—and the rest of his observations, curious as they doubtless appeared at the time, are scarcely more accurate. Though painstaking scholars both in this country and on the Continent continued to piece together such fragments of ill-assorted information as came their way, it was not for another century that Indian philology succeeded in finding a more secure foundation than wild guesses and extravagant speculations. At the same time it is only just to observe that the study of individual languages contrived to make considerable headway, in spite of all handicaps: and because subsequent research has made it possible for the beginner nowadays to come to his task equipped with an elaborate apparatus of grammars, dictionaries and reading-books, it requires a little imagination to picture the sense of utter bewilderment with which the neophyte to India sought to pick his way through the seemingly impenetrable jungle of uncharted speech that greeted him on his arrival two or three centuries ago. The successful recognition and dissection of upwards of eight hundred separate languages and dialects current among a population of nearly four hundred million souls must remain one of the greatest achievements of human patience and scholarly acumen: almost the whole of this immense



THE PALACE OF THE GREAT MOGHUL
Engraving from John Ogilby's *Asia*, 1673

task has been performed by British orientalists, for the majority of whom this was merely a work of supererogation, the preoccupation of rare leisure.

No sound philology of the languages of India could be constructed until Sanskrit, the parent of a vast progeny, had been seriously and scientifically studied. Three-quarters of the eighteenth century had already passed when there occurred one of those strange and unaccountable phenomena known to all sciences and every art—the unpredictable appearance of a genius and the grouping about him of a school. The name of this genius was Sir William Jones, a man universally recognised as one of the greatest linguists ever born. Jones, a native of London, and educated at Harrow and University College, Oxford, early acquired a taste for oriental studies and was aided by a prodigious memory that enabled him on one occasion to write out the entire text of Shakespeare's *Tempest* by heart. As we have seen, Jones soon mastered Arabic and Persian; he read for the Bar, and was called in 1774; a distinguished career followed. In September, 1783, he arrived in India to be a judge of the Supreme Court at Fort William: he at

once set about learning Sanskrit, and with a number of other British residents founded in 1784 the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the purpose of conducting an "enquiry into the history and antiquities, arts, sciences and literature of Asia." This was an event of capital importance, for here we find the first beginnings of a scientific movement which was destined to spread to all parts of the world. In Bengal, Jones met a kindred spirit in Charles Wilkins, who had independently commenced the systematic study of Sanskrit : the interplay of these two energetic and insatiably inquisitive minds resulted in the publication of a number of pioneering works that laid the foundations of Indian linguistics. Jones not only translated the ordinances of Manu—"esteemed by the Hindus the first of created beings, and not only the oldest, but the holiest of legislators"—he also produced the first version of Kalidasa's renowned play *Sakuntala*. His most important discovery was, however, the recognition of the relationship between Sanskrit and the other languages now called Indo-European. It was only three years after his arrival in India that he made public these epoch-making observations. "The *Sanskrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure ; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin* and more exquisitely refined than either ; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident ; so strong, indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists. There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanskrit* ; and the old *Persian* might be added to the same family, if this were the place for discussing any question concerning the antiquities of *Persia*." These are the roots of modern comparative philology. Jones contracted inflammation of the liver and died in 1794, a man still in the prime of his tireless energies and matchless intellect. Like many other great British orientalists, he was a competent poet as well as a scholar, and produced a large volume of verses both translated and original. He wrote French excellently : his researches included observations on law, education, astronomy, medicine and botany, and he translated from Italian, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Sanskrit. But it is as the "universal linguist" *par excellence* that William Jones lives in the annals of fame : he was truly the father of British orientalism.

Sir Charles Wilkins, whom we have already mentioned twice, was born at Frome in 1749 or 1750 ; went out to India at the age of twenty as a writer in the Company ; rapidly mastered Persian and Bengali ; and about 1778 began to study Sanskrit with Indian pundits. He was a grand-nephew of the engraver Robert Bateman Wray, and it may be from him that he inherited that gift which found expression in the designing and casting of the first Persian and Bengali printing

types to be used in India, an achievement which has earned for him the name of India's Caxton. When Wilkins's translation of the Sanskrit *Bhagavad-gita* was published by the East India Company at Warren Hasting's instance in 1785, "all hailed its appearance as the dawn of that brilliant light, which has subsequently shone with so much lustre in the productions of Sir William Jones, Mr. Colebrooke, Professor Wilson, &c., and which has dispelled the darkness in which the pedantry of Greek and Hebrew scholars had involved the etymology of the languages of Europe and Asia." Shortly afterwards Wilkins was invalidated home, but recovered to continue his studies : in 1801 he was appointed to the first charge of the Company's Library and Museum in Leaden-hall-street, an appointment he held with great distinction until his death in 1836. Wilkins was an indefatigable worker and made numerous contributions to Persian and

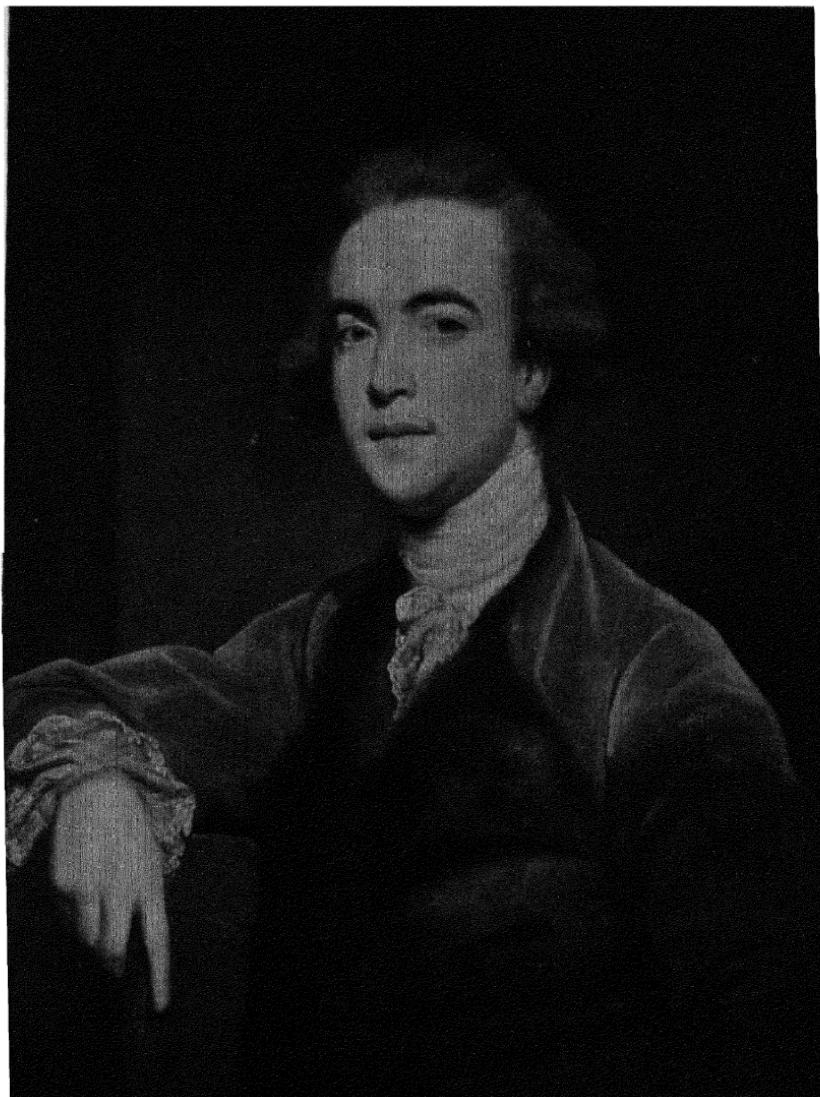


SANSKRIT ROLL BROUGHT FROM BENGAL
From *The Oriental Collections*, 1798

Sanskrit studies : his grammar of Sanskrit remained for many years a standard work and formed part of the curriculum of the Company's College at Haileybury. As a foundation member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal it was only natural that he

should play a leading part in the institution in 1823 of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, whose actual founder was Henry Thomas Colebrooke, the third of the great trinity of Sanskrit pioneers. Colebrooke indeed was not at first much taken by the activities of his learned contemporaries in Bengal : he once described Wilkins as "Sanskrit-mad," and stigmatised the *Asiatic Miscellany* as a "repository of nonsense." However, his conversion to the orientalist cause followed in due course, and Colebrooke lived to be not only one of the greatest contributors but also one of the most generous patrons to Sanskrit philology. While holding high office in the Company's service—in 1801 he was appointed Chief Judge of the High Court of Appeal, in 1805 he became a member of the Supreme Council—Colebrooke pursued his linguistic researches and at the same time put together at considerable expense a fine collection of Sanskrit manuscripts which he presented in 1819 to the Company's Library. Henry Colebrooke was typical of many of his British colleagues in India during this astonishing half-century : his contributions to human knowledge, quite apart from his special study of linguistics, embraced astronomy, law, philosophy, mathematics, comparative religion, agriculture, economics and even mountaineering.

The foundations of Sanskrit philology were thus at last soundly laid. In the meantime other British scholars had been investigating the spoken languages of India : for it must be remembered that Sanskrit, a language of equal antiquity with ancient Greek and Latin, was long since extinct as a medium of ordinary intercourse ; while the decline of the Moghul Empire and the break-up of the administration centred in Delhi led to the gradual ousting of Persian as the instrument of polite culture and the emergence of the hitherto despised vernacular tongues as vehicles of literary self-expression. It is to the lasting credit of British scholars—administrators, soldiers and missionaries—resident in India at this epoch that they played a leading part in encouraging this significant development. The pioneer of Indian vernacular studies was William Carey, a Serampore missionary who arrived in 1793 and at once began translating the Holy Scriptures into a variety of Indian languages. His labours led him to study the grammars and vocabularies of some thirty-three different tongues, and the results were published in 1816 in a report signed jointly by Carey, J. Marshman and W. Ward. This report, which included a version of the Lord's Prayer in each of the languages analysed, constitutes a veritable linguistic survey and was the parent of all subsequent researches. The following is a list of the languages included in Carey's survey, in the original spelling : Sungskrit, Bengalee, Hindee, Kashmeera, Dogura, Wuch, Sindh, Southern Sindh, Kutch, Goojuratee, Kunkuna, Punjabee or Shikh, Bikaneer, Marawar, Juya-poora, Ooduya-poora, Harutee, Maluwa, Mythilee, Nepal, Assam, Orissa or Ootkul, Telinga, Kurnata, Pushtoo or Affghan, Bulochee, Khassee, Burman. It is noteworthy that in this report, apart from numerous other errors and omissions, the authors failed to diagnose the existence



By courtesy of Earl Spencer

SIR WILLIAM JONES 1746-1794
Oil painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds

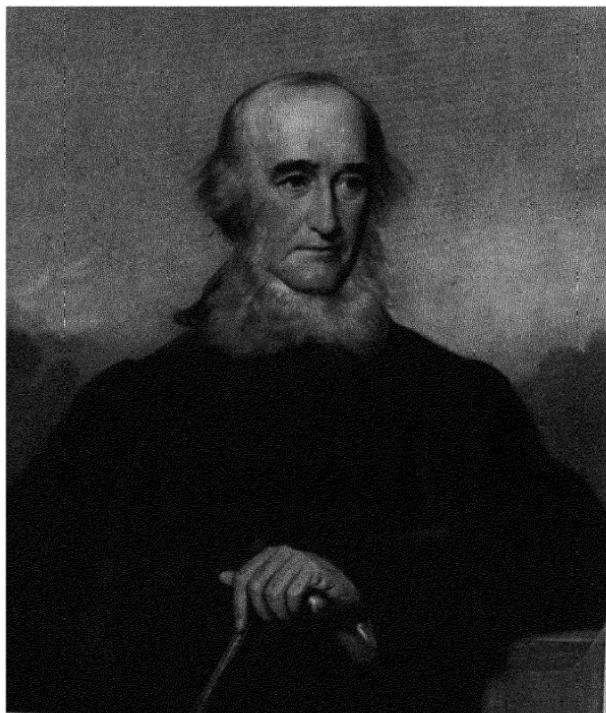
By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries, London
THE GOD OF LEARNING APPEARING TO A SCHOLAR
Chinese Painting, 18th Century



of a separate group of South Indian (Dravidian) languages : it was for B. H. Hodgson to make good this mistake.

The investigation of individual languages on a more scientific basis now proceeded in earnest, and numerous grammars and vocabularies were compiled by a growing band of enthusiasts. In so brief a space it is not possible to record even leading names : no doubt one day an Encyclopaedia of Oriental Studies will be written, and then each patient and laborious worker in this mighty harvest of knowledge will receive his due wages of appraise. Then too will be told something of the methods they employed to perfect their researches : the tedious and exasperating business of taking down words and grammatical forms from the lips of native speakers, collating results, eliminating errors, often constructing a scientific grammar and syntax where none previously existed, sometimes in the remoter dialects committing sounds to paper for the first time. To no name does greater lustre attach than to that of Brian Houghton Hodgson, a man fashioned in the model of Sir William Jones himself. This truly great scholar, whose fruitful life of nearly ninety-five years won for him the admiration and affection of the entire world of learning, and whose generous benefactions enriched the libraries of Calcutta, London, Oxford and Paris, after making noteworthy contributions to the zoology and ethnology of Nepal where he was for a number of years British Resident, ranged widely over the field of Indian philology as well as taking in the languages of Indo-China and Tibet. While the best complete account of the man and his work is Sir W. Hunter's *Life of Hodgson* (London, 1896), it is interesting to quote here the tribute paid to him by another very great indologist who died but recently at an almost equally patriarchal age. "Then followed a number of important papers," writes Sir George Grierson, "still classics, and still full of varied and accurate information regarding nearly every non-Aryan language of India and the neighbouring countries. Space will not allow me to give even a dry catalogue of the subjects which he adorned. Suffice it to say that he gave comparative vocabularies of nearly all the Indo-Chinese languages spoken in India and the neighbouring countries, and of the Munda and Dravidian forms of speech. These he compared with many languages of Central Asia in the search of one common origin for the whole . . . It is true that he failed to establish his favourite theory of a common origin for all the languages explored by him,—that is a matter still under enquiry, and on which the opinions of scholars are still divided,—but this hardly diminishes the value of his writings, which contain a mass of evidence on the aboriginal languages of India that has never been superseded. Its hall-marks are the wide extent of area covered, clearness of arrangement, and accuracy of treatment."

Hodgson's long life has disturbed our chronological sequence, and we must therefore retrace our steps somewhat in order to follow the progress of the path prepared by Jones, Wilkins and Colebrooke. We have seen with what enthusiasm



H. T. COLEBROOKE 1765-1834
Engraving by Atkinson after G. Richmond

and at the cost of what personal labour and expense these scholars had pursued their favourite "amusements"; and it is thus all the more poignant to read what Colebrooke wrote in a letter to H. H. Wilson, dated 24 December, 1827: "Careless and indifferent as our countrymen are, I think, nevertheless, that you and I may derive some complacent feelings from the reflection that, following the footsteps of Sir W. Jones, we have with so little aid of collaborators, and so little encouragement, opened nearly every avenue, and left it to foreigners, who are taking up the clue we have furnished, to complete the outline of what we have sketched." This is what Colebrooke the Sanskritist wrote more than a century ago: his bitter charge against public indifference has with justice been echoed by virtually every British orientalist since, whether his particular field was Arabic or Chinese, Javanese or Turkish. It can scarcely have happened in the history of science that so much work of fundamental importance and intrinsic excellence has been



SIR CHARLES WILKINS c. 1749-1836
Engraving by Sartain after J. G. Middleton, 1830

produced in so chilling and cheerless an atmosphere—for orientalism in this country has scarcely yet recovered from its damning and wholly uninformed indictment by Lord Macaulay, and we have lived to regret, in these late days, the lamentable results of an incomprehensible neglect of the cultural bonds forged with the peoples of Asia a century and a half since by a wiser generation of Englishmen than any that has succeeded it. Not only has the purely British science of orientalism been left for foreigners, and especially Germans, to exploit : it has become almost traditional in this, the country of Jones and Hodgson, to assume that these things are always done better abroad, and even in numerous instances to encourage foreign scholars to the neglect of our own.

Horace Wilson, successor to Wilkins at Leadenhall-street and first occupant of the Boden Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford, found his way to orientalism via the Calcutta Mint, where he served under Sir Walter Scott's friend John Leyden,

to whom we shall refer later. Wilson had come out to India as a surgeon, but he abandoned the knife for the die, and later exchanged this for the pen and gown. In what generous mould these Bengal pioneers were cast ! Wilson was a voluminous writer on a great variety of subjects : his character and abilities are best described in the tribute paid him by his pupil Sir Monier Williams : "In reality Wilson owed his celebrity to his boldness in entering upon investigations which no one had before attempted, to his excellence as a writer, to his faculty of lucid exposition, to the unusual versatility of his genius, including, as it did, poetical, dramatic and musical powers of a high order, and, perhaps more than anything else, to his untiring industry and the wide range of his contributions to almost every branch of Oriental research." Of Wilson's many translations and essays on Hindu literature the most celebrated is his last work, a rendering of the *Rig-veda*.

Another employee of the Calcutta Mint who distinguished himself alike as a numismatist and a philologist was James Prinsep : despite a sadly brief life, this native of London left his mark on many branches of indology, but his chief title to fame is the pioneering work he did in deciphering the Asoka inscriptions. In this he had a colleague who came to study the glorious career of Asoka from a far different angle. Ceylon had passed beneath British rule in 1796, and George Turnour, grandson of the first Earl of Winterton, born in the island in 1799 and entering Government service in 1818 was not dismayed by the indifference of his contemporaries but set to work enthusiastically to master both the spoken Singhalese and the classical Pali : the latter he acquired direct from its sole exponents at that time, the Buddhist priests. By a tragic coincidence Turnour did not long survive his friend Prinsep : he left Ceylon in failing health in 1842, but died the following year. Both men, despite the brevity of their careers, paved the way for subsequent research of the highest significance.

Twenty years after the birth of Turnour in Ceylon, an Englishman was born at Bombay who in his turn carried forward the work of Colebrooke and Wilson. Sir Monier Williams who, as we have mentioned, studied under Wilson at Oxford, eventually succeeded his teacher as Boden Professor after holding the chairs of Sanskrit, Persian and Hindustani at Haileybury College. He is best known for his Sanskrit dictionary, his books on Buddhism and Hinduism, and his translation of the *Sakuntala*. Monier Williams was a contemporary of the man who, more than any other, succeeded best in interesting his fellow-countrymen in the ancient wisdom of India. Sir Edwin Arnold was born at Gravesend on 10 June, 1832, and after taking a third in Greats at Oxford went out to the charge of Deccan College, Poona. He returned to England after the Mutiny and became leader-writer and later for twenty-eight years editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. Arnold, besides being a competent scholar of oriental languages, was a most prolific writer and produced a whole series of original and translated works on Indian thought and politics : his books enjoyed a great vogue, the most famous of them, *The*

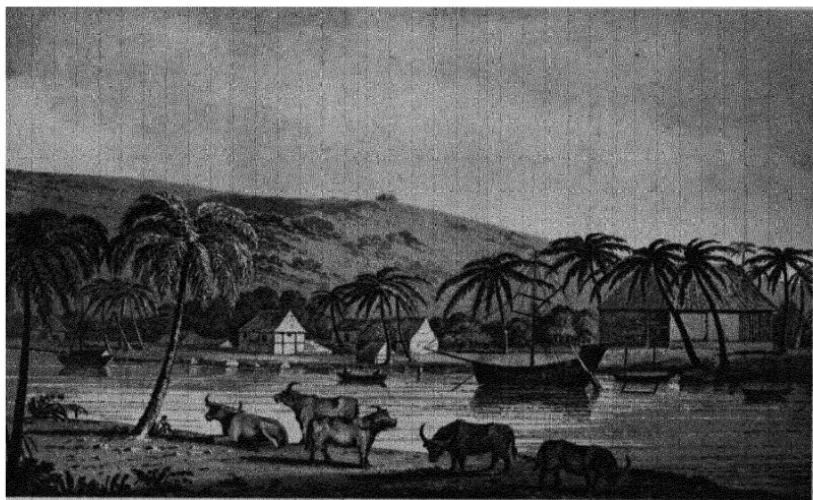
Light of Asia, passing through sixty English and eighty American editions in twenty years ; his poetry was of an order that brought him within measurable distance of Laureateship. Towards the end of his life Sir Edwin Arnold visited a Japan then freshly romantic and conceived an enthusiasm for Japanese culture : his third wife was Japanese. Sadness clouded the closing years of a remarkably fruitful and brilliant life of devoted service to the cause of Anglo-Asiatic understanding, for Arnold became totally blind at the age of 62 : he died in 1904, full of years and honours. Apart from *The Light of Asia*, others of his books which attained a deserved popularity were *The Song Celestial* (a verse-translation of the *Bhagavad-gita*), *The Light of the World*, a life of Christ, *Pearls of the Faith* (a collection of religious poems including some fine interpretations of Islam), and *Indian Poetry* : he also wrote some charming travel-books and a play on Japanese life. Arnold's affection for India was always his foremost concern ; and it will be appropriate to quote here words he wrote in which the ideals cherished by many another of his countrymen who have served India and Britain well find eloquent expression. "We are introducing in India an idea unknown to the East, as it was unknown to Europe before commerce and the Italian cities taught it—the idea of popular rights and equality before an impartial and written law. If in that mission we violate justice, and let our ambition get before our duty, we shall spoil our own work ; which will else bring the circumference of civilization back to its starting point, and completing the round of human intercourse, repay to the East the heavy debt due to it from the West, in religion, art, philosophy, language—in almost everything but the science of government."

In this brief essay many even of the most famous names must pass unnoticed, and the careers and personalities here recorded must therefore be taken purely as representative of many others. The results of these vast labours in comparative linguistics were gathered together to provide a foundation of that magnificent edifice the *Linguistic Survey of India*. The author of this truly monumental work, Sir George Grierson, spanned with his giant intellect three generations of indologists, and his gentle character is a dear and near memory to the many friends and pupils who but recently mourned his death. Grierson wrote massively on many branches of Indian studies and made noteworthy contributions to Sanskrit philology ; but all these productions, which would have by themselves sufficed to establish an average scholar's reputation, were a mere by-product of the genius who gave the *Linguistic Survey* to the world. This stupendous work occupied more than thirty years in compiling ; it is characteristic of the simplicity which is the hall-mark of true greatness that its author should have written, on completing his labours : "Without any pretended modesty I confess that no one is more than myself aware of the deficiencies of the Survey, nor, on the other hand, need I plead guilty to a vain boast when I claim that what has been done in it for India has been done for no other country in the world. Such as it is, I bid

it adieu, sure of sympathy with my mistakes, and of appreciation of what in it is worthy, on the part of those lovers of India who are competent to put its merits and its defects to test." Some faint conception of the vast scope of this historic publication may be gathered from the fact that Grierson lists no fewer than 872 languages and dialects, and gives comparative vocabularies of 368 of these.

Sir George Grierson's scientific life extended over half a century, during which, in Indian as in other branches of oriental studies, the process of specialisation moved on rapidly. It is inevitable in any science that the point should be reached, sooner or later, when the neophyte to research no longer finds himself able to cover more than a limited field of interest in a single lifetime ; and in consequence he tends to divorce himself more and more from those principles of a universal and fundamental character which alone avail to keep him in sympathy with the general public and the general public in sympathy with him. The day is gone, when the "universal linguist" could hope to emulate a Sir William Jones both in leading the vanguard of linguistic research and in making the fruits of that research available to the ordinary reader in an intelligible and attractive form ; much less may he take within his orbit the natural sciences, history and religions of the territory of his choice. Yet despite the handicap imposed by the requirements of modern scientific accuracy and specialisation, such after all is the human appeal which lies at the root of all oriental studies that many orientalists during the last two generations have succeeded, while doing work of the highest importance in their own particular subjects, to interpret that work to their fellows interested in all humane letters but lacking the opportunity and leisure to learn eastern languages. For India, as for other regions, this enterprise has been shared by statesmen, soldiers, administrators and missionaries as well as professional scholars. Meanwhile the high research into the origins of language that Jones founded and Hodgson pursued has by no means been neglected. While the multitudinous tongues of Burma as well as India have been surveyed, the explorations of Sir Aurel Stein have unearthed remote dialects long dead which have enabled experts to supply numerous new pieces to the intricate jigsaw. F. W. Thomas, the leading Sanskritist of his generation and a successor of both Wilkins and Wilson, has been devoting his later years to an incredibly patient deciphering of the Stein fragments, and, like many another British orientalist before him, "voyages in strange seas of thought, alone," knowing that only posterity can pass final judgment on the fruits of his labours.

Some day the whole story of British indology will be told, and that will assuredly make a glorious, fascinating and inspiring narrative : to that rich banquet the present chapter may perhaps serve as an *apéritif* ; after tasting which we pass on to consider what our countrymen have accomplished in the learning and languages of Indonesia and the Far East.



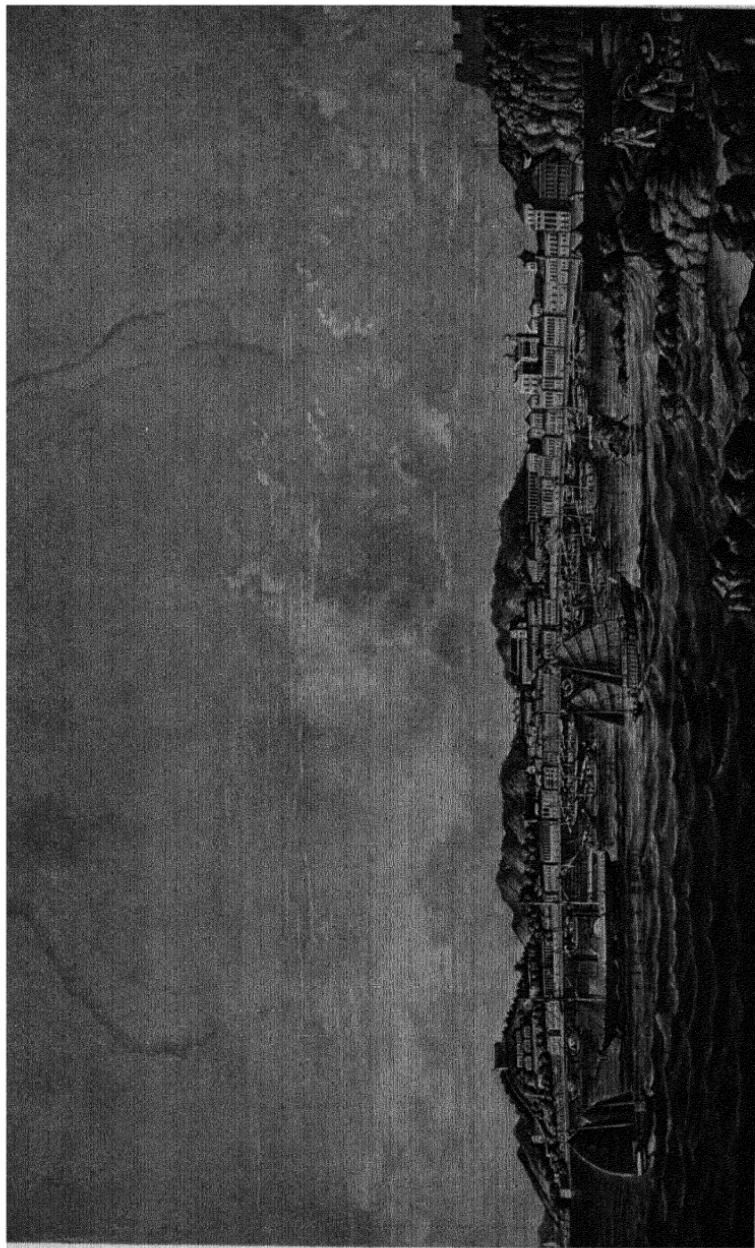
ENTRANCE OF PADANG RIVER, SUMATRA
Aquatint from Marsden's *History of Sumatra*, 1811

INDONESIA AND THE FAR EAST

MARCO POLO visited Sumatra in 1292 and found there Malay Muslims. But it was not until 1511 that the European, in the person of the then western enemy of Islam, the Portugese, got a footing in the Malayan region. Diego Lopez de Sequeira visited Malacca in 1509, but its "Moors" or Gujerati Muslims thwarted his attempts to trade. Two years later, to avenge this incident, Affonso d'Albuquerque captured Malacca from the Malays to become for 130 years the centre of Portugese power. Spain, circling the globe westwards never penetrated beyond the Philippines, and it was the Dutch who next sought commerce in the East Indies, taking Malacca in 1641 and Ceylon in 1656. Their East India Company had a monopoly of Malayan waters until in 1786 the British acquired Penang. Drake had passed through the Straits of Malacca in 1579, and our own East India Company had sent James Lancaster to Acheh in 1600 to start trade there, but the Amboyna massacre of 1622 and Dutch competition led to the closing of British establishments in the Malay Archipelago, and Bencoolen on the east of Sumatra was our sole trading post when Penang was founded. From 1786 British influence in the Malay Peninsula expanded without interruption, to the benefit of protectors and protected, until the recent Japanese invasion.

Malay and Javanese studies were prosecuted by the European races in the order of their coming. St. Francis Xavier, reaching Malacca in 1545, translated into Malay parts of the Christian liturgy, while Dutch missionaries prepared the earliest version of the Bible. The first Englishman to pursue Malayan studies with distinction was William Marsden, Charles Wilkins's son-in-law. Born at Verval in county Wicklow in 1754, he was educated in Dublin and was about to enter Trinity College, when on his brother's advice he took service with the East India Company, and arrived at Bencoolen in 1771. He remained in Sumatra eight years, rising to be principal secretary. William and his brother John left the Company's service, and in 1785 started a profitable East India agency in Gower-street. The emergency that followed Napoleon's rise to power brought City brains to Whitehall, and in 1795 Marsden accepted the appointment of Second Secretary at the Admiralty, rising to become First Secretary in 1804 : he thus had the distinction of serving his country in a post of great responsibility when the battle of Trafalgar was fought. In 1807 Marsden resigned from the Admiralty and devoted his remaining twenty-nine years to his favourite studies. He had a fine collection of oriental coins, on which he was an authority, and presented them to the nation in 1834 : his collection of Malay manuscripts is now in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies. His most important publications were a *History of Sumatra* (1783) praised by Southey, a *Dictionary and Grammar of the Malayan Language* (1812), and *Numismata Orientalia* (1823-1825) : he also translated Marco Polo. Marsden was one of the founders of the Royal Asiatic Society and became its treasurer and vice-president.

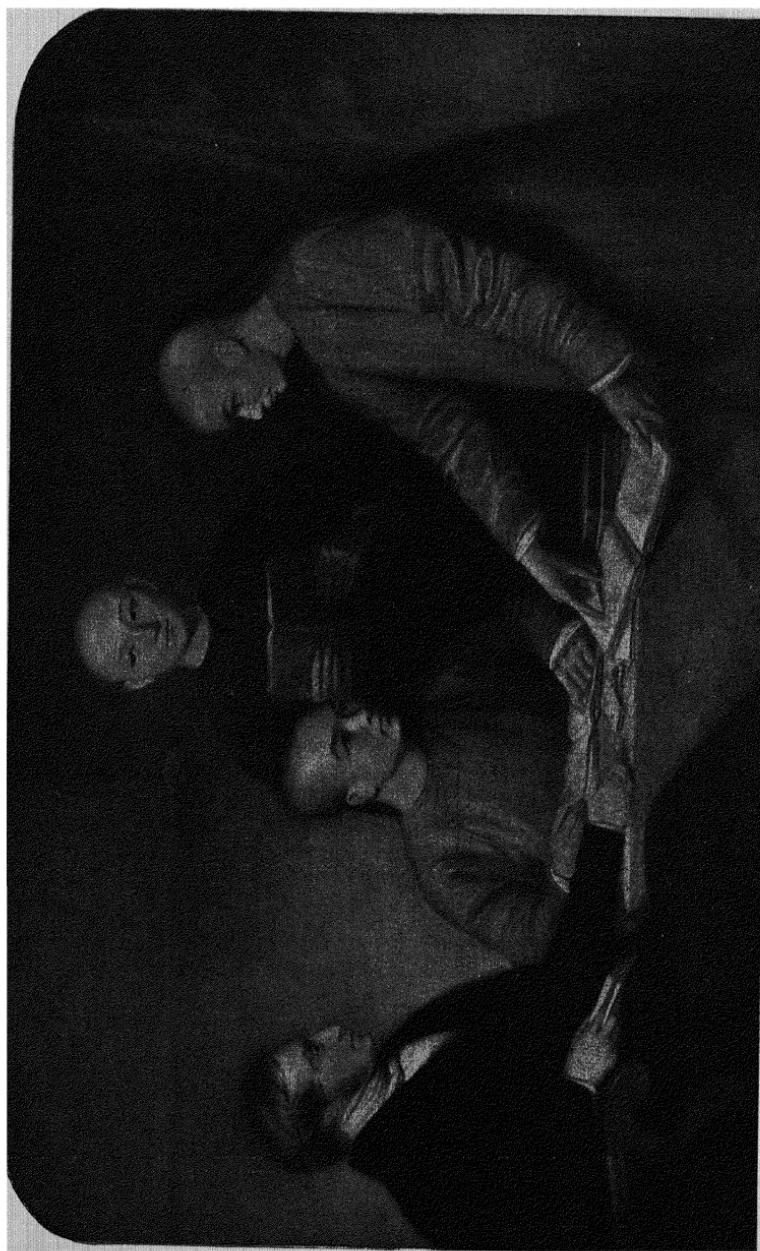
Sir Stamford Raffles (1781-1826), the founder of Singapore, as part of his humane policy towards the Asiatic took a lively interest in Malayan studies and acquired a fluent though apparently not very idiomatic mastery of the language : his competence was sufficient for him to serve as a government translator and interpreter for some years. His manuscripts now at the India Office and the Royal Asiatic Society bear testimony to his learned interests which among other activities inspired him to found the London Zoological Gardens. More important perhaps even than his *History of Java* was his encouragement and example to others. Among these must be mentioned John Leyden, a native of Scotland and a close friend of Sir Walter Scott, with whom he collaborated in the *Border Minstrelsy*. He joined the East India Company's service and went out to Madras as an assistant surgeon, but later transferred to the Calcutta Mint. Leyden, who was a shepherd's son and came from the same tiny Scotch village as our greatest lexicographer, Sir James Murray, had an insatiable appetite for languages and reached proficiency in many, assisting in the translation of the Bible into several eastern tongues. He spent three years with Raffles in Penang, and translated part of the *Malay Annals* ; he then returned to India, but accompanied Lord Minto on his expedition to Java where he died of a fever at the age of thirty-five.



MACAO, CHINA

By courtesy of the Parker Gallery, London

Coloured gouache drawing by a Chinese artist, 19th Century



By courtesy of the London Missionary Society

DR. JAMES LEGGE WITH THREE THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS AT HONG KONG

Oil painting by H. Room, c. 1843

An early Resident of Raffles' Singapore was John Crawfurd, a native of Islay and a medical graduate of Edinburgh, who went to India as a surgeon in 1803 and served with the army in the North-West Provinces for five years. Transferred to Penang in 1808, he acquired such command of Malay that Lord Minto took him to Java where he served until the island was returned to Holland in 1817. Going back to England Crawfurd published in 1820 a *History of the Indian Archipelago*, noteworthy in its time but now dated. His chief interest was in Indo-China, but in 1852 he published a grammar and dictionary of Malay, and in 1856 a *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries*.

These were the founders of the British tradition of Malayan studies. To their influence are to be traced such works as *The British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* by Captain Thomas John Newbold, F.R.S., *The Malay Peninsula* (1834) by Captain Begbie of the Madras Artillery, and the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, edited by its most frequent contributor, James Richard Logan. Sir William Maxwell, son of the first Chief Justice of the Straits Settlements, wrote a *Manual of the Malay Language* which served several generations of students, though his name may live longest for important papers on Malay law, history and folk-lore. After being Colonial Secretary, Singapore, Maxwell was appointed Governor of the Gold Coast: following the Ashanti expedition he contracted black-water fever, and died on his way home.

The next important Malay scholar, Richard James Wilkinson, who was born at Smyrna in 1867 and died there in 1940, was also Colonial Secretary, Singapore, and then became Governor of Sierra Leone. He devoted forty years to compiling a Malay-English dictionary which should long hold the field, and he started, edited and wrote for *Papers on Malay Subjects* (Kuala Lumpur) which stimulated all later research. No one, however, has done more to enhance the prestige of British scholarship in the Malay field than Sir Richard Winstedt. Notable for his official services to the cause of Malay education, particularly vernacular and technical, he has also a record of energetic research and has published many important books on Malayan history, literature and linguistics. His principal works include *A History of Malaya*, *A History of Malay Literature*, an *English-Malay Dictionary*, and *Shaman Saiva and Sufi*, being a study of Malay magic. He has also served the student well with three Malay grammars and a colloquial dictionary, and he produced the first Malay history in Malay for Malays. Among the texts he has edited are *Pantun Melayu* (with an introduction translated into French, Dutch and German), a series of folk-tales, the Malay version of the Persian Tales of a Parrot and the earliest and previously unknown version of the *Malay Annals*.

The Englishmen who have contributed most to Malay philology have been administrators distinguished for humanity and service to the Oriental. With such examples before them, there can be no doubt that future generations of Englishmen who will go East to serve Britain and Malaya will prosecute research

no less successfully into the fascinating languages and cultures of the lovable peoples of Indonesia.

In China, as elsewhere throughout the East, the Portugese were the first in the field, Andrade arriving at Canton in 1517 : they obtained permission to occupy a part of Macao in 1557. Russian missions to Peking in 1567 and 1619 were abortive ; the Spaniards from Manila traded with Fukien from 1575 ; the Dutch settled at Formosa in 1624. In 1636 John Weddell led a trading expedition on behalf of Sir W. Courteenes which penetrated as far as Canton : the story of this great enterprise is told by Peter Mundy a merchant who sailed with Weddell. Courteenes' initiative was in defiance of the East India Company's charter rights, but his business was amalgamated with the Company's in 1649. It was not until well into the eighteenth century, however, that trade on any considerable scale was established. Diplomatic missions to the Imperial Court led by Lord Macartney in 1792 and Lord Amherst in 1816 failed to establish satisfactory relations between the two countries, and only in 1853 was ambassadorial representation commenced on a regular basis. Meanwhile activities of another kind had been in progress, which had a most important bearing on the development of British sinology. Early in the nineteenth century missionaries of the various Protestant churches began to arrive in China and set to work energetically to learn the language as an essential preliminary to the conversions they hoped to secure. We shall see that to missionaries belongs in large measure the credit for the remarkable progress in Chinese studies made since 1807.

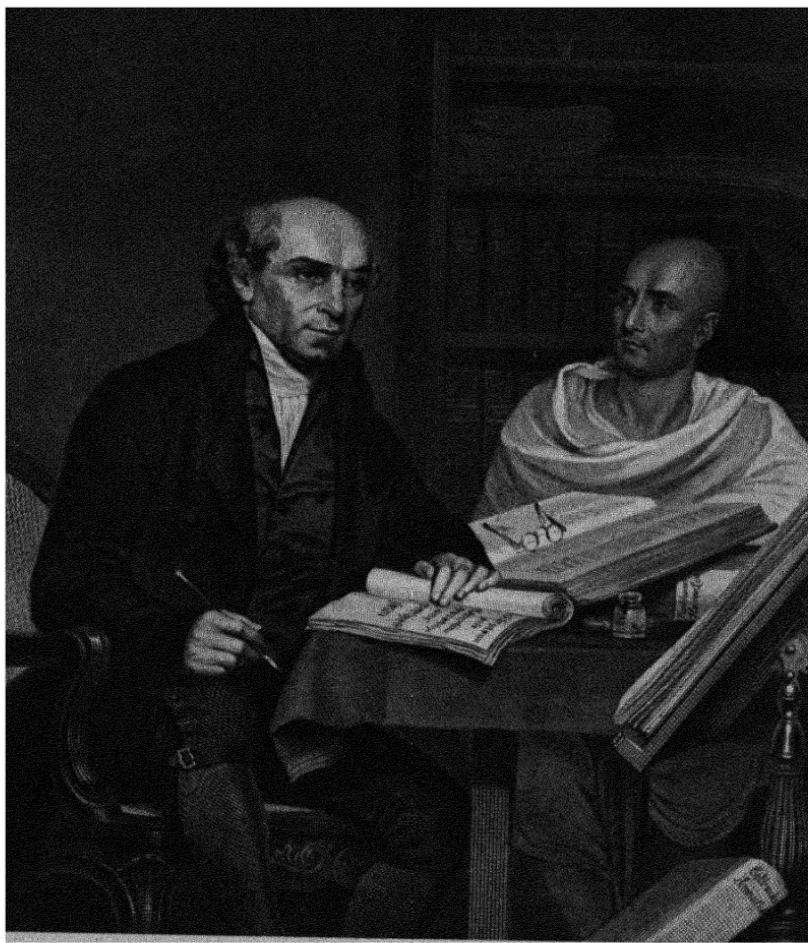
The first Englishman known to have been acquainted with Chinese was one Lloyd, appointed in 1699 to the council of five designated to assist the East India Company's President in China. James Flint, because of his fluency in Chinese, was sent by the Company in 1755 to initiate trade in Ningpo and Chusan : his mission failed when an Imperial edict required all foreign trade except Russian to concentrate at Canton ; but instead of going south Flint persevered as far as Tientsin. In 1759 he returned to Ningpo, but on coming down to Canton was arrested and thrown into prison, there remaining despite all protests until he finally left China in 1762. Neither Lloyd nor Flint wrote anything on the Chinese language that has survived : it was not until the second decade of last century that the first English manuals of Chinese appeared. The early Catholic missionaries had written handbooks for their own use, but these were not generally published : it was in 1703 that the earliest European grammar was printed, that of Francisco Varo a Dominican. The story of British sinology properly begins with the names of Marshman, Morrison and Medhurst.

Joshua Marshman was born in 1768, the son of a weaver : after a rudimentary village schooling he was apprenticed to the London bookseller, Cater, but five years later, having meanwhile profited of his chance to read omnivorously, he rejoined his father at the loom. In 1794 Marshman succeeded in having him-

	弓		象		眼
	弩		蝦		耳
	戟		蠅		手
	劍		鷄		腳
	笛		鵝		身頭
	筆		梳		農
	斧		剪		馬
	椎		劙		

self appointed master of the Baptist School at Broadmead, Bristol : the inspiring example of William Carey moved him to volunteer for India, and in 1799 he arrived at Serampore. There he worked with Carey on the preparation of translations of the Holy Scriptures into a number of Indian languages and also, as we have seen, collaborated with him in drawing up the linguistic report of 1816. He was not content, however, to confine his attention to Indian studies : he mastered Chinese sufficiently to publish at Serampore an English version of Confucius' sayings ; this he followed up in the same year, 1809, with a dissertation on the characters and sounds of the Chinese language, and in 1814 with a grammar of Chinese. Marshman was also responsible for the first complete translation of the Bible into Chinese, this being the earliest Chinese book to be printed from movable metal types. This son of a weaver did not return from the mission field, but died at Serampore in 1837. He thus survived by three years Robert Morrison, who was sent out to China in 1807 by the London Missionary Society as its first representative. Morrison was a native of Northumberland and was apprenticed to a boot-tree maker, but by dint of working twelve to fourteen hours a day he got himself a schooling in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, paying his tutor out of his exiguous earnings. The London Missionary Society accepted him for ordination, and after studying medicine and astronomy and copying at the British Museum a Harmony of the Gospels in Chinese compiled by the Jesuits, he went out to China. It being impossible for him to preach openly at that time, he was glad to take employment as an interpreter with the East India Company : in 1817 he accompanied Lord Amherst on his unsuccessful mission to Peking. His twenty-five years' labours in China brought him in only ten converts, but the fruits of his linguistic studies were more considerable. His great work was an impressive dictionary of Chinese in six volumes, published at the expense of the East India Company between 1815 and 1823. The rival continental sinologist Klaproth saw fit to attack this masterpiece savagely, accusing its author of plagiarising the work of a Catholic missionary of which he claimed to have a copy : Morrison had the satisfaction of living to see his honour fully vindicated. He also published a grammar of Chinese and supervised the printing of a translation of the Bible in 21 volumes. His son John Robert Morrison (1814-1843), born at Macao and educated in England and at Malacca, succeeded his father as Chinese secretary and interpreter to the Superintendents of British trade, and was associated with Medhurst and two others in bringing out a new translation of the Bible. His death of malaria at Hongkong was described by Sir Henry Pottinger as "a positive national calamity."

Walter Medhurst, the third of the British pioneers in Chinese studies, was a native of London. After leaving St. Paul's he studied printing, and in 1816 went out to Malacca to take charge of the missionary printing works : he was ordained in 1819. He learned Malay and Chinese, and travelled about the East



PROFESSOR CAREY ATTENDED BY HIS PUNDIT
AT THE COLLEGE, CALCUTTA
Engraving by Worthington after Howe

Indies, holding appointments at various times in Penang and Batavia : later he settled at Shanghai. While in Batavia Medhurst published an English and Japanese vocabulary : in all he is stated to have been responsible for 59 Chinese, 6 Malay and 27 English books ; the best known are his Chinese and English

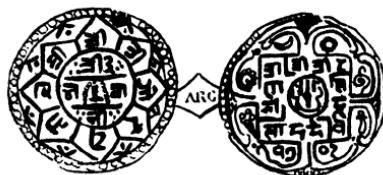
dictionary in two volumes and his *Chinese Dialogues*. His son, Sir Walter Henry Medhurst, who held a number of important official appointments in China, was also a good Chinese scholar. Most distinguished of all British sinologists of the nineteenth century was James Legge, born at Huntley in 1814 and a graduate of Aberdeen. The London Missionary Society sent him to Malacca in 1839, and four years later he took the Anglo-Chinese College to Hongkong, where he remained until 1873. In 1876 a chair of Chinese was founded at Oxford, and Legge was its first occupant. He was a brilliant and industrious scholar : setting himself in 1841 the task of translating the entire Chinese classics, he completed his immense labour shortly before his death. He also wrote many volumes on China generally, including studies of Confucius and Mencius and *The Religions of China* (1880). Legge's translation of the *Analects* of Confucius, though coloured by his missionary outlook, is a monument of erudition and an immense advance on all previous interpretations.

Perhaps the most famous name in the history of British sinology is that of Giles : for following the dynastic system not uncommon among British scholars of Chinese, both father and son have rendered distinguished services to Chinese studies. Herbert A. Giles, born in 1845 and educated at Charterhouse, joined the China consular service in 1867 and after serving British interests well for twenty-six years resigned, to be elected four years later to the Cambridge chair of Chinese. For thirty-five years Giles professed with great distinction, and was honoured by numerous learned societies both in this country and abroad. He died in 1935 at the great age of 89. The long list of his publications extends over fifty-five years, beginning with a translation of Longinus and ending with *Quips from a Chinese Fest-book* : in this interval he wrote on all subjects connected with Chinese history, language and literature. His books were twice awarded the Prix St. Julien by the French Academy, of which he was made a member in 1924. Of many works which will always live the greatest is his famous Chinesè-English dictionary containing nearly 14,000 characters, the best in any language. The son, Lionel Giles, who retired but recently from the charge of the Department of Oriental Books and Manuscripts in the British Museum, is also a distinguished sinologist and has published much important work. It is hardly necessary to introduce to the British public the name of Arthur Waley, whose delicate renderings of Chinese and Japanese poetry have enriched English literature and proved once more that an orientalist can also be a poet.

Here our sketch of British Orientalists must close. We have travelled across the greater part of the globe, and seen how men born in various stations and different parts of the British Isles have gone forth from these shores to study the cultures of many old and splendid civilisations, or apprehended these cultures in the seclusion of their own libraries. No idiom has been too remote for British minds to master, no thought too abstruse for British spirits to understand. These

men, and their countless colleagues unnamed in these pages, coming to orientalism often to find relief from the busy cares of office, have forged bonds of international understanding too strong ever to be broken.

While it is certainly true that Britain's fortunate and privileged position in the East has been the chief cause and incentive for oriental studies in this country, we have to look a little deeper to discover the motives which induced many of our orientalists to embark on this exotic quest. Perhaps in attempting to solve this problem the author may be permitted to strike a personal note. Like Leyden, Marshman and Palmer, he began life enjoying none of the so-called privileges of birth, but was fortunate in having the greatest advantage of all, parents who gave him every encouragement in his zeal for study. His father was a sailor who had circumnavigated the globe and spent many years in the Far East before he was born : the author's interest in the Orient may therefore perhaps be to some slight extent hereditary. At school he profited of a good memory to learn several languages, and while still a boy began to study Arabic. Being under the necessity of planning a career, he had meanwhile to confine his energies to the task of acquiring a safe degree : this accomplished, he was encouraged by his college to indulge his taste for oriental languages, and was later able to visit the countries whose peoples and cultures had provoked his curiosity. Only then was he able to discover the facts which justified his instinctive leaning, and form the basis of his integrity as a scholar : that despite differences of colour, race, religion, climate, upbringing, he is conscious of a deep affinity with the mind and soul of the East transcending all secondary variations. In short, he is able to say with Terence, "I am a man : I reckon nothing that is human alien to me." Between the ordinary man of the West and his brother-man in the East there exists not a barrier insurmountable but a common humanity that craves for realisation. In the years to come, when the world will be rebuilding and grave problems in Asia as well as Europe have to be resolved, if civilisation itself is to be saved, it will be seen that the "amusements" of the Bengal pioneers, taken up by their successors, have played a most important part in promoting that true respect and sympathy between peoples which alone can form the foundation of a better society and a more lasting peace.



BRITISH ORIENTALISTS

- ADELARD OF BATH, fl. 1125
 ROBERT OF CHESTER, saec. 12
 DANIEL OF MORLEY, saec. 12
 MICHAEL SCOTUS, saec. 13
 BEDWELL, W., 1561-1632
 GREAVES, J., 1602-1652
 POCOCKE, E., 1604-1691
 CASTELL, E., 1606-1685
 POCOCKE, E. Jr., 1648-1727
 OCKLEY, S., 1678-1720
 SALE, G., 1697-1736
 JONES, W., 1746-1794
 GLADWIN, F., d. c. 1813
 WILKINS, C., c. 1749-1836
 MACKENZIE, C., c. 1753-1821
 MARSDEN, W., 1754-1838
 CAREY, W., 1761-1834
 PRICE, D., 1762-1835
 COLEBROOKE, H. T., 1765-1837
 HINDLEY, J. H., 1765-1827
 MARSHMAN, J., 1768-1837
 LEYDEN, J., 1775-1811
 LUMSDEN, M., 1777-1835
 RAFFLES, S., 1781-1826
 MORRISON, R., 1782-1834
 TOD, J., 1782-1835
 CRAWFURD, J., 1783-1868
 WILSON, H. H., 1786-1860
 MEDHURST, W., 1796-1857
 TURNOUR, G., 1796-1843
 BROWN, C. P., 1798-1854
 FORBES, D., 1798-1868
 PRINSEP, J., 1799-1840
 HODGSON, B. H., 1800-1894
 LANE, E. W., 1801-1876
 CURETON, W., 1808-1864
 FITZGERALD, EDWARD, 1809-1883
 MUIR, J., 1810-1882
 RAWLINSON, H. C., 1810-1895
 REDHOUSE, J. W., 1811-1891
 THOMAS, E., 1813-1886
 LEGGE, J., 1815-1897
 MORLEY, W. H., 1815-1860
 MONIER-WILLIAMS, M., 1819-1899
 MUIR, W., 1819-1905
 DOWSON, J., 1820-1881
 YULE, H., 1820-1889
 BURTON, R., 1821-1890
 CUST, R. N., 1821-1909
 MEDHURST, W. H., 1822-1885
 LEES, W. N., 1825-1889
 BEAL, S., 1825-1889
 COWELL, E. B., 1826-1903
 WRIGHT, W., 1830-1889
 ARNOLD, E., 1832-1904
 WHINFIELD, E. H., 1835-1922
 BLUNT, LADY ANNE, 1837-1917
 MILLS, L. H., 1837-1918
 TAWNEY, C. H., 1837-1922
 CHILDERS, R. C., 1838-1876
 PALMER, E. H., 1840-1882
 IRVINE, W., 1840-1911
 BLUNT, W. S., 1840-1922
 WOLLASTON, A. N., 1842-1922
 KENNEDY, J., c. 1842-1920
 HOWORTH, H. H., 1842-1923
 DAVIDS, T. W. RHYS, 1843-1922
 DOUGHTY, C., 1843-1926
 LYALL, C. J., 1845-1920
 GILES, H. A., 1845-1935
 ROBERTSON-SMITH, W., 1846-1894
 MAXWELL, W. E., 1846-1897
 FLEET, J. F., 1847-1917
 SMITH, V. A., 1848-1920
 GRIERSON, G. A., 1851-1941
 ANDERSON, J. D., 1852-1920
 PARGITER, F. E., 1852-1927
 FERGUSON, D. W., 1853-1910
 AMEDROZ, H. F., 1854-1917
 MACDONELL, A. A., 1854-1926
 LE STRANGE, G., 1854-1934
 BENDALL, C., 1856-1906
 GIBB, E. J. W., 1857-1901
 CHALMERS, LORD, 1858-1938
 MARGOLIOUTH, D. S., 1858-1940
 ELLIS, A. G., 1858-1942
 BEVAN, A. A., 1859-1934
 RAPSON, E. J., 1861-1937
 BROWNE, E. G., 1862-1926
 ARNOLD, T. W., 1864-1930
 HAIG, T. W., 1865-1938
 BELL, GERTRUDE, 1867-1926
 WILKINSON, R. J., 1867-1940
 ROSS E. D., 1871-1940

